NATION
India to buy $4B P-8I planes from US
≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS
US tariffs weigh heavy as equity takes biggest hit
≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS
Hong Kong Open: Satwik-Chirag reach first final of season
≫ Page: 8 ≪

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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Manipur waits for 2 yrs, gets one short PM visit

PM says Centre is with Manipur, calls for peace in the state

IMPHAL/ CHURACHANDPUR, 13 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday vowed to transform Manipur into a "symbol of peace and prosperity" as he urged all groups to shun violence, assuring the people that the Centre stood firmly with them in rebuilding lives torn apart by the ethnic conflict.

Modi, who landed in Manipur's capital Imphal on his maiden visit to the state after ethnic clashes erupted in May 2023 between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities, described the state as the "ratna" adorning the crown of "mother India" and lauded the role of the "valiant sons" of Manipur in the success of Operation Sindoor.

Terming any violence in Manipur "unfortunate", Modi struck a note of healing, reassurance, and confidence as he listened to the concerns of the families of internally displaced persons (IDPs) at the historic Kangla Fort complex in Imphal and Peace Ground in Churachandpur.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with violence-affected people at relief camp, in Churachandpur, Manipur on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

The PM, who has faced sharp criticism for not travelling to Manipur despite the prolonged unrest in which over 260 people have been killed and thousands were rendered homeless, underlined that the Centre's efforts were already yielding results.

"Manipur is the 'Mani ratna' adorning the crown of 'Mother India'. Any form of violence here is condemnable. It is not only unfortunate but also a grave injustice to our ancestors and future generations," Modi said. "I appeal to all organisations that moving on the path of peace will help realise your dreams. Secure the future of your children. And I promise you today that I am with you. The Centre is with you, with the people of Manipur."

During his visit, the Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for development projects worth Rs 8,500 crore.

Stressing that the only way forward was to build a "bridge of trust" between the Hills, home to the Kuki community, and the Valley, dominated by the Meiteis, Modi, in his public meeting in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district, said a "new dawn of hope and trust" was rising in the state.

Earlier, while launching projects worth Rs 9,000 crore in Mizoram, Modi said that "vote bank politics" had destroyed the North East. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

> **He didn't go when there was unrest. He goes there now after the disturbance has been minimised. Why didn't he go there in the last three years?**
>
> —Siddaramaiah, Karnataka Chief Minister

CM, PM announce ex-gratia after 9 die in Hassan

MYSURU, 13 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the death of nine people after a truck lorry crashed into a Ganesha procession in Hassan and announced ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 2 lakh respectively. "The government giving compensation to the families of the deceased does not mean it is equal to the value of life. The compensation is given to express condolence to the bereaved families," Siddaramaiah told reporters at Mysuru airport on Saturday. The Prime Minister's Office also announced that the injured would be given Rs. 50,000 compensation. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

UN votes in favour of two-state solution

UNITED NATIONS, 13 SEPT

The UN General Assembly on 13 September voted overwhelmingly, 142-10 with 12 abstentions, in favour of a nonbinding resolution supporting a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who opposes this move, declared, "There will be no Palestinian state," during a signing ceremony for settlement expansions in the West Bank. Palestinian UN Ambassador Riyad Mansour highlighted the resolution as a reflection of the international community's desire for peace. The resolution urges recognition of Palestine and hints at a transitional governance post-conflict. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

Vijay launches poll campaign to rousing reception

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam founder, actor-politician Vijay was accorded a rousing reception on Saturday by his party workers and admirers before starting his campaign 'I am coming' for the 2026 Assembly election. As soon as Vijay arrived at the airport Tiruchirappalli from Chennai, enthusiastic TVK workers, carrying party flags, pushed away barricades on the airport premises at several spots to get a glimpse of their leader. Vijay said he entered politics to serve people. "I have seen enough of (money. Should I come into politics to make money? No need. I have no intention other than to serve you". *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

R'than: Monsoon withdrawal likely from 15 Sept

JAIPUR, 13 SEPT

The southwest monsoon is anticipated to begin its departure from Rajasthan next week, according to the meteorological centre. Forecasts indicate a dry spell across most of western Rajasthan for the upcoming week, while eastern regions may experience dry conditions for the next few days. "Conditions are favourable for the departure of the monsoon from some parts of western Rajasthan from 15 September," the weather office said. However, light to moderate rainfall is expected in some areas of south-eastern Rajasthan starting from 16 September. On Friday, light rain hit in Dholpur district, while the rest of the state was dry. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Nepal's election to be held on 5 March

KATHMANDU, 13 SEPT

Nepal's next Parliamentary elections will be held on 5 March, President Ramchandra Paudel's office has announced, following a week of violent protests that led to the resignation of KP Sharma Oli. Former Chief Justice Sushila Karki has taken over as the country's first woman Prime Minister.

Paudel, while dissolving the House of Representatives on the recommendation of the newly-appointed interim Prime Minister on Friday, said the next parliamentary election would be held on 5 March.

Karki will form a small Cabinet on Sunday, with some two dozen ministries, including Home, Foreign Affairs and Defence.

As the Prime Minister's Office in Singhdurbar Secretariat was set on fire during the two-day agitation, the newly-constructed building for the Home Ministry within the Singhdurbar complex is being prepared for the Prime Minister's Office.

Meanwhile, authorities on Saturday lifted the curfew and restrictive orders imposed in Kathmandu Valley and other parts of Nepal, allowing daily life to gradually return to normal. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

People hold a candlelight vigil to honour victims of the anti-government protests, outside the Parliament, in Kathmandu, Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Slap 50-100% tariff on China: Don to NATO

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

US President Donald Trump on Saturday said NATO countries should impose 50 to 100 per cent tariffs on China and stop buying oil from Russia to help end the Ukraine conflict.

Trump's post on Truth Social comes a day after the US asked G7 countries to impose tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia.

Trump said he is ready to impose "major sanctions" on Russia when all NATO countries agree and start to do the same thing and stop buying oil from Moscow. He said that NATO's commitment to win has been "far less than 100 per cent, and the purchase of Russian oil, by some, has been shocking!".

"It greatly weakens your negotiating position, and bargaining power, over Russia," he said.

Trump also said that the Ukraine war is "not his conflict" and it would never have started if he was president.

"It is Biden's and (Ukraine President Volodymyr) Zelenskyy's war. I am only here to help stop it …If NATO does as I say, the war will end quickly, and all of those lives will be saved! If not, you are just wasting my time, and the time, energy, and money of the US," he said. *—PTI*

>>>>More on Pg 6

NATO LAUNCHES 'EASTERN SENTRY' AFTER POLAND AIRSPACE BREACH

BRUSSELS, 13 SEPT

NATO has announced the launch of a new defensive initiative, "Eastern Sentry," following the incursion of Russian drones into Polish airspace earlier this week, raising alarms across Europe's eastern border.

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte said the operation will commence in the coming days, with support from several member states, including Denmark, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom. "Eastern Sentry will add flexibility and strength to our posture and make clear that, as a defensive alliance, we are always ready to defend," Rutte remarked, calling the drone incursion "unacceptable."

US General Alexus Grynkewich, NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, noted that the mission will incorporate air and naval assets, enhanced air defence systems, and improved intelligence sharing, with deployments including F-16 jets from Denmark and Rafale aircraft from France. Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk dismissed suggestions that the drone crossing was accidental, something US President had endorsed. *—ANI*

SC's SIR verdict encroaches our jurisdiction: EC

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The Election Commission has told the Supreme Court that any direction to conduct Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls at regular intervals throughout the country would "encroach" upon the exclusive jurisdiction of the poll panel.

In a counter-affidavit filed in the apex court, the EC said it has the "complete discretion" over the policy of revision to the exclusion of any other authority.

It said through its 5 July 2025, letter addressed to all Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of states and Union Territories, except Bihar, the commission has directed the initiation of immediate pre-revision activities for SIR of electoral rolls with reference to 1 January, 2026, as the qualifying date. The affidavit said the EC is vested with constitutional as well as statutory powers to oversee the preparation and revision of electoral rolls.

"Any direction to conduct a 'SIR' at regular intervals throughout the country would encroach upon the exclusive jurisdiction of the ECI," it said.

The affidavit was filed on a plea by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, who has sought a direction to the EC to conduct SIR of electoral rolls at regular intervals throughout India, particularly before elections, to ensure that only Indian citizens decide the polity and policy of the country. *—PTI*

2 die in freak auto accident in City

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Two people died in a horrific accident involving a truck, car and auto on Sumanahalli Junction road in the City.

The incident occurred on Saturday. The two deceased, Yeshu and Jennifer, were in the auto, when it collided with the truck, which was coming in the opposite direction. The truck's breaks reportedly failed, leading to the collision.

Two others were seriously injured in the accident are currently undergoing treatment.

Kamakshipalya traffic police have visited the site and registered a case. *—Salar News*

Ex-Meghalaya CM DD Lapang passes away at 93

SHILLONG, 13 SEPT

Veteran politician and four-time chief minister of Meghalaya, Donwa Dethwelson Lapang, affectionately known as 'Maheh', died at the age of 93. His family said he died in a hospital here, having faced age-related ailments for a prolonged period.

Survived by his wife, Amethyst Lynda Jones Blah, and two children, Lapang will be accorded a state funeral on Monday.

Former MP and Congress leader Vincent H Pala was present at the hospital during Lapang's final moments. Born on 10 April 1932, Lapang entered politics in 1972 by winning Nongpoh seat as an Independent. He served as CM from 1992 to 2010 and was pivotal in establishing Ri-Bhoi district. He later joined National People's Party in 2018, serving as chief advisor to the state. *—PTI*

>>> More on Page 5

Cong booked for AI video of PM's mom

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

An FIR has been registered in Delhi against Congress leaders for sharing an AI-generated video featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his late mother, Heeraben Modi. The video, posted on 10 September by Bihar Congress on X, has been described in the FIR as "maligning and defaming" the image of the Prime Minister and a gross violation of law and women's dignity.

It is filed by BJP Delhi election cell convenor Sanket Gupta, who said the video, depicting PM Modi dreaming of his mother criticising his politics, aimed to tarnish his image. BJP President JP Nadda called it "irresponsible." In contrast, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera defended it, stating, "Where is the disrespect?" *—Agencies*

'GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY'

UK police probe Sikh woman's gangrape as 'racial assault'

LONDON, 13 SEPT

The UK police has issued an appeal for information over an alleged rape of a British Sikh woman earlier this week, which the force said is being treated as a "racially aggravated assault".

Police said it was called on Tuesday morning after the woman, in her 20s, reported being sexually attacked at Tame Road, Oldbury, in the Sandwell area of the West Midlands region of England. The two white male suspects are said to have targeted the woman and made a "racist remark" during the attack and "asked her to go back to her country".

"We're investigating after a woman reported to us that she had been raped in Oldbury in what we are treating as a racially aggravated attack," West Midlands Police statement said. "The woman has told us that a racist remark was made to her during the attack. We are currently treating it as an isolated incident," the statement added.

Police said they are keen to speak with anyone in the area who may have seen the two suspects. One of them is said to have a shaved head, heavy build and was reported to be wearing a dark coloured sweatshirt and had gloves on. The second man was reportedly wearing a grey top with a silver zip.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The local MP for Smethwick, Gurinder Singh Josan, said the "truly horrific attack" had left the victim traumatised and appealed for anyone with information to assist the police in investigating the "hate crime". "The police are working extremely sympathetically with the victim at her pace who has been traumatised by the attack," he added.

The local gurdwara, Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick, has organised a public meeting on Friday to discuss vigilance and safety measures for members of the community. *—PTI*

Goods vehicle runs over City woman

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

A 45-year-old woman pedestrian tragically lost her life after being run over by a goods vehicle in the Cottonpete area of the City. The victim, Anjadevi, was walking along Mill Road at approximately 5.30pm on Friday with another woman when a speeding goods vehicle struck her from behind. "A CCTV camera has recorded the scene," said police. The woman accompanying Anjadevi escaped with minor injuries. Following the incident, the goods vehicle collided with seven other vehicles, causing damage to four motorcycles and three cars. Authorities have registered a case at the Chamarajapete Traffic police station, and the driver of the goods vehicle has been arrested, according to a senior police officer. *—PTI*

CTR: HM must save Constitution, not Sharia

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

BJP MLC C T Ravi on Saturday demanded that Home Minister G Parameshwara "save the constitution, not to promote sharia laws, stop appeasement of Muslim politics." Speaking to reporters, he said, "I will not stop telling the truth to people about targeting Hindus by Muslims regarding Maddur Sundays violence even after police filed an FIR against me. Will people tolerate if stones were pelted to Ganesha idol? Stones were also thrown at the people participating at the Ganesha idol immersion procession.... Hindu activists were not ready to listen to the tolerance lesson preaching by Congress leaders when they were hurt by stone pelting in Maddur. Islam religion is against co-existence," he added. *—SALAR NEWS*

Hassan toll rises to 9; PM & CM announce ex-gratia

CM says compensation cannot replace the lives lost

MYSURU, 13 SEP

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the death of nine people after a truck lorry crashed into a Ganesha procession in Hassan and announced ex-gratia of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 2 lakh respectively.

"The government giving compensation to the families of the deceased does not mean it is equal to the value of life. The compensation is given to express condolence to the bereaved families," Siddaramaiah told reporters at Mysuru airport on Saturday.

"We have formulated the Road Safety Act. If an accident happens due to the mistake of truck drivers, how can the government be held accountable? I offer my respect to those killed in the accident."

Siddaramaiah also said that he had asked district in-charge minister Krishna Byre Gowda to visit the families of the victims and announce the ex gratia.

Rejecting BJP's demand to enhance the compensation to Rs 10 lakh, Siddaramaiah asked, "How much did they give during their tenure in government? If they had given then, we too would have considered it."

"We give compensation keeping in mind the financial condition of the economically weaker sections. It must be given equally in all such cases," he asserted.

Similarly, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) offered its condolences to the tragedy.

"In this tragic hour, my thoughts are with the bereaved families," the PMO said in a post on X. "An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000."

According to an official statement, 19 people have been admitted in Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences.

Two patients have been moved to Intensive Care Unit (ICU), with one person needing surgery from a rib fracture. The other 18 are reportedly stable.

Two people have been admitted in the Mangala hospital ICU, with both of them in a stable condition. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah ***PHOTO: PTI***

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla with Karnataka Assembly Speaker UT Khader, Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti and others during the 11th Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) India Region in Bengaluru on Saturday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

Police will decide on action against Simha, says CM

MYSURU, 13 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday said that police will decide on whether to book former BJP MP Pratap Simha over his provocative statements.

Simha had filed a petition in the Karnataka High Court against the State government's decision to invite International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate this year's Dasasra festival in Mysuru.

If Simha attempts to create disturbances during the celebration, the police will take action against him, Siddaramaiah said in Mysuru.

"Let the matter be settled in court," he said about the petitions.

Reacting to FIRs against BJP leaders CT Ravi and Basanagouda Yatnal, Siddaramaiah said, "If BJP leaders make provocative speeches, what should we do?.... We will take action against those who make inflammatory speeches. This is not politics."

Responding to allegations that the action targeted Hindus, he said, "I am also Hindu. My Name is Siddaramaiah. Sidda means Eshwara. Ramaiah means Rama or Lord Vishnu.

CONVERSION

Responding to BJP's charge that the state government was adding new castes to the caste census, Siddaramaiah said, "What do they say about the caste census undertaken by the central government?"

He clarified that converted persons would be counted under their present caste.

"People are converting because of the system. If Hindu society had equality and equal opportunities, why would they convert? Why did untouchability come? Did we not create it ourselves? Though inequality exists in Hindu, Muslim, and Christian religions, people have converted. It is their right," he maintained.

CASTELESS SOCIETY

Addressing a large gathering at the inauguration of Sri Shivarathri Rajendra Anubhava Mantapa and the office of the JSS Prasada Nilaya Senior Students Housing Cooperative Society near Varuna Lake in Mysuru later in the day, Siddaramaiah said that building a casteless society is the essence of the Constitution.

He said a casteless society was something that 12th-century social reformer/philosopher Basavanna also envisioned and said that education played a key role in realising this goal.

—Salar News with Agencies

A NEW BEGINNING

MLA and BDA Chairman NA Haris with women autorickshaw drivers during an autodrivers training exercise for women & transgenders by BPac at Rangoli Metro Station in Bengaluru on Saturday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

M'luru CCB busts fake docu racket for bails

MANGALURU, 13 SEPT

The Mangaluru City Crime Branch (CCB) has dismantled a fake document racket involved in bail proceedings, arresting several individuals in the process. Acting on a tip-off on 9 September, the CCB discovered that the accused were using forged Aadhar cards and pahani documents as sureties in court to secure bail for those arrested in criminal cases.

"Several individuals have been arrested for their involvement in a fake document racket," stated Mangaluru Police Commissioner Sudheer Kumar Reddy. He detailed that Abdul Rahman, arrested from the Urva police station jurisdiction, had facilitated court bail for accused individuals using fraudulent documents, while Nishant Kumar, employed at a computer centre, was responsible for producing these counterfeit documents.

The suspects allegedly placed their own photos on fake Aadhaar cards, successfully cheating the court in two cases. The investigation revealed additional accomplices, including Nitin Kumar and Hasan Riyaz, who used fake identities to obtain bail at local police stations. Mohammed Hanif was also arrested for providing fake documents to assist the accused. *—ANI*

Our water, our right: DKS on disputes

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar called on the BJP to speak for the State in regards to the river disputes between Karnataka and its neighbours – namely Maharashtra, Goa and Tamil Nadu. He said it was "our water, our right."

"BJP MPs should speak up or resign," he said in a statement after inspecting the progress of the Hemavathi Link Canal in Tumakuru on Saturday. "BJP MPs should speak out in favour of Karnataka, including Mekedatu, Kalasa Banduri, Bhadra Upper Bank grant, and permission to increase the height of Almatti. Otherwise, they should resign and face re-election."

He said he had met Central ministers over the projects several times. "BJP MPs have not met the Prime Minister or the Union Minister for Jal Shakti even once. Ministers Prahlad Joshi and Somanna, except for those who said they had spoken, are just a bunch of neem leaves," he said.

- BJP MPs should speak out in favour of Karnataka, including Mekedatu, Kalasa Banduri, Bhadra Upper Bank grant, and permission to increase height of Almatti, he said

The Bhadra Dam is a lifeline for five districts, he added.

On Alamati issue, he said "Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has said that he will not allow the elevation of Almatti to be raised to 524 meters. All I can tell him is, you are not a judge, it is our water and our right. You cannot stop the gazette notification."

CM Siddaramaiah in Mysuru also hit back at Fadnavis. He said the tribunal had permitted the dam height to be raised from 519m to 524m in 2010. "It has been 15 years now, and this objection is being raised for political reasons," he said.

On Goa's opposition to the Mahadayi project and Tamil Nadu's stand against Mekedatu, Siddaramaiah said, "The Prime Minister should give clear directions to BJP CMs." *—Salar News*

Man duped of ₹8L in fake PM Kisan scam

BIDAR, 13 SEPT

In a distressing case of cybercrime, a 31-year-old painter from Chillargi village in Bidar district of the State, Neelakanth Outi, fell victim to an e-SIM scam that has cost him Rs 8 lakh. Allegedly linked to a fraudulent PM Kisan app, the perpetrators obtained an e-SIM in Neelakanth's name, subsequently siphoning funds from his bank account.

The fraud came to light when Neelakanth's wife contacted the manager of the Union Bank of India's Chillargi branch to inquire about a mobile number associated with his account. They were informed of numerous unauthorised transactions, including loans such as "Navi Loan," which had been recorded without Neelakanth's consent.

Neelakanth reported this to the Cybercrime Helpline at 1930. A bank statement confirmed the transactions and fraudulent fund transfers totalling Rs 8 lakh.

The cybercrime police are investigating. Neelakanth has urged authorities to trace the fraudsters, recover his lost savings, and initiate legal action against those responsible. *—Salar News*

Auto driver beats Kolar teacher, booked

KOLAR, 13 SEPT

Police in Malur taluk, Kolar, have registered an FIR against an auto driver, Chowdappa, for allegedly assaulting a government school teacher in Kshethranahalli village.

The incident occurred on Friday at Government Higher Primary School, where teacher Manjula questioned a student about repeated absences and unpreparedness for a test. The boy left saying he would bring his mother. Shortly afterward, Chowdappa, the boy's father, stormed into the class, abused Manjula and allegedly pushed her against a doorframe, causing a minor head injury. Other staffers rushed to her aid as the accused fled.

Block Education Officer Kempaiah said parents often created disturbances at the school and that Manjula had recorded the incident for her safety. He urged police to act swiftly. Manjula, the lone teacher at the school with just four students, said she faced constant pressure.

Roshani Gowda, President of Karnataka State Women's employees Association visited Manjula's residence on Saturday and said that even after a lapse of more than thirty hours, the accused has not been arrested. *—Salar News*

Include sexual harassment case in resume: SC to VC

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

In a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court of India has directed that details of alleged sexual harassment involving a university vice-chancellor (VC) be included in his resume, stating it should "haunt him forever." The ruling follows a complaint lodged in December 2023 by a faculty member from a West Bengal university, which was deemed time-barred.

A bench comprising Justices Pankaj Mithal and Prasanna B Varale noted, "It is advisable to forgive the wrongdoer, but not to forget the wrongdoing." The court upheld a Calcutta High Court decision that dismissed the complaint, as the last alleged incident occurred in April 2023, exceeding the three-month limitation period for filing complaints.

The appellant's case claimed that the VC had made inappropriate advances since September 2019, demanding sexual favours under threat of repercussions. However, the court clarified that administrative actions taken against the appellant later were not acts of harassment.

The court mandated this saying, "This judgment shall be made part of the resume of respondent no.1, compliance of which shall be strictly ensured by him personally." *— PTI*

Woman kills 5-yr-old daughter, lover helps

BIDAR, 13 SEPT

A woman, along with her extramarital partner, has been booked for allegedly torturing and killing her 5-year-old daughter by dumping her alive in the Tungabhadra river in Ranebennur taluk, police said on Saturday.

Annappa and Jyoti, residents of Guddada Anveri in Ranebennur taluk, allegedly murdered the child on 2 August by throwing her alive into the Tungabhadra river after subjecting her to physical torture, Haveri Superintendent of Police Yashodha Vantagodi said.

Jyoti is the wife of Manjunath and the mother of three children. She was allegedly in a relationship with Annappa, and both were working in a hotel, she said.

Vantagodi said that Jyothi had left her husband and two children, taking the youngest child along with her, to live with Annappa. The trio was living in Guddada Anveri. Jyoti and Annappa decided to kill the girl because they feared that she would reveal their relationship to others.

"They brutally tortured the child -- tied her hands, poured boiling water and did not take her to the hospital, fearing that they would end up in trouble. They kept the child with burns all over her body at home for two days. Then they threw the girl alive in the river," Vantagodi said.

On 8 August, the body was found in the river, which comes under Guttal police station in Haveri taluk, police said. *—PTI*

BEHEADED IN DALLAS

Slain B'luru man's kin raises Rs 1.76 cr

DALLAS, 13 SEPT

The family of Chandra Mouli "Bob" Nagamallaiah, the Indian-origin motel manager brutally beheaded earlier this week, will hold his funeral on Saturday at 2 pm (local time) at Flower Mound Family Funeral Home in Flower Mound, Texas. A fundraiser launched for Nagamallaiah's wife, Nisha, and son, Gaurav — who witnessed the attack — has raised nearly $200,000 (approx. Rs 1,76,54,697) to cover funeral expenses and Gaurav's college education.

Nagamallaiah, 50, was killed at the Downtown Suites motel by co-worker Yordanis Cobos-Martinez, 37, a Cuban national with a violent criminal history. Authorities said Cobos-Martinez had been released from ICE custody earlier this year after Cuba refused his deportation.

The accused Cobos-Martinez killed his employer and motel manager Chandra Mouli "Bob" Nagamallaiah ***PHOTO: PTI***

Homeland Security also said that the accused has a rap sheet with several crimes, including child sex abuse, grand theft of a motor vehicle, false imprisonment and carjacking. They said that after the murder, Martinez kicked the head of the victim around "like a soccer ball."

Assistant Homeland Security Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said the case highlights "policy gaps that allow dangerous offenders to remain in the US despite removal orders."

However, Cobos-Martinez is now set to be deported to Cuba.

The Consulate General of India in Houston said it is closely monitoring the case. Consul General D.C. Manjunath confirmed contact with the family and local authorities.

Indian-American groups expressed shock. SEWA International pledged support, while the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America demanded a national inquiry into rising violence. Indiaspora called the act "horrific" and urged dignity and safety for all. *—Agencies*

QUOTE of THE DAY

Karki occupying the top post of that country is an example of women's empowerment. She will pave the way for peace, stability and prosperity in Nepal

—NARENDRA MODI,
Prime Minister

PM's Manipur visit too little, too late: Cong

Cong says visit for less than five hours show Modi's insensitivity towards people of state

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The Congress on Saturday described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Manipur visit as a "pit stop", and said it was "shockingly insensitive" of him to be there "for less than five hours" when he has the time and inclination to spend days campaigning and travelling worldwide.

Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said the people of Manipur have been undergoing tremendous pain, distress, suffering, and agony for the past 28 months ever since violence erupted in the state.

Earlier, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge accused Modi of organising a grand welcome ceremony for himself and claimed that it "is a cruel prick" to the wounds of those still suffering.

He also said that during the ethnic clash in Manipur, Modi had made 46 foreign trips. His last visit to the state was in January 2022.

The Opposition parties claimed that PM Modi's Manipur visit was a display of how a leader can lack empathy for the public **PHOTO: PTI**

Congress general secretary and local MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also hit out at Modi and said he should have visited the northeastern state long ago.

Congress general secretary KC Venugopal also lashed out at Modi over his Manipur visit, calling it a "belated and face-saving farce".

PM Modi's Manipur visit on Saturday is a display of how sorely lacking in empathy and compassion a leader can be, he claimed.

He said the Modi government has neither presented a solution to address the "deep social rift that caused the civil war" nor does it have the "courage to bring warring groups together" and make a genuine attempt at peace.

- Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam Ramesh, said the people of Manipur have been undergoing tremendous pain, distress, suffering, and agony for the past 28 months ever since violence erupted in the state.

Modi reached Manipur on Saturday afternoon on his first visit to the state after ethnic violence broke out in May 2023.

DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi claimed that the visit was motivated more by the 2027 Manipur Assembly elections. *—PTI*

PM Modi calls for development in Manipur

CHURACHANDPUR / IMPHAL, 13 SEPT

In his first visit to Manipur after ethnic-conflict tore the state apart, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for development.

"India is moving forward with a singular goal, the goal of Vikshit Bharat and achieving this goal requires the development of Manipur," he said on Saturday in Imphal.

"For development to take root anywhere, peace is essential. In the last 11 years, many conflicts and disputes in the Northeast have been resolved. People have chosen the path of peace and given priority to development," he said.

Modi said the Centre has approved the construction of 7,000 new houses for those affected by the conflict, alongside a special package of about Rs 3,000 crore.

Modi also laid foundation stones for projects worth over Rs 7,300 crore from Manipur's Churachandpur district.

He claimed the Centre's sustained engagement with all sides, through dialogue and development, would bring back normalcy.

"For Manipur's development, for the resettlement of displaced families, and for the establishment of peace, the Centre will continue to support the Manipur government in every possible way," he said.

Modi also made a special mention of Manipur's women, calling them "the driving force of the state's development and self-reliance." *—PTI*

Drone seized near LoC in Jammu & Kashmir

JAMMU, 13 SEPT

Police on Saturday seized a drone from a forward village close to the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu's Akhnoor sector, officials said. Acting on a tip-off, the device was recovered from an agricultural field in Fattu Kotli village in the Garkhal area. Authorities have opened an inquiry to determine whether the drone had crossed over from Pakistan or was being used locally, possibly to film a wedding. The recovery has heightened security concerns in the sensitive border belt, where similar incidents have been reported in the past. Local residents were reportedly unaware of the drone's presence until the police operation. The device has been sent for forensic analysis. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

SC to issue interim order on Waqf Act on 15 Sept

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The Supreme Court is set to announce interim orders on 15 September regarding the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025. Key points of contention include the authority to denotify properties designated as "waqf by courts, waqf-by-user or waqf by deed". The bench, led by Chief Justice BR Gavai, previously reserved its decision after hearing arguments from both sides. The petitioners contest the Act's composition of state waqf boards, asserting that only Muslims, aside from ex-officio members, should serve. They also challenged provisions relating to inquiries into government land. The Centre defended the Act. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal branded the law a "complete departure from the constitutional principles". *—PTI*

Kerala clears draft bill to amend Wildlife Act

T'PURAM, 13 SEPT

The Kerala government has approved a draft bill to amend the Wildlife Protection Act to curb rising human-animal conflicts. The Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, endorsed provisions allowing the Chief Wildlife Warden to order the immediate killing of any wild animal that attacks and injures a person in inhabited areas. State Forest Minister AK Saseendran said the bill avoids lengthy procedures under central law while still protecting vulnerable species. It also gives the state authority to declare certain animals as vermin, permitting them to be killed and their meat consumed. The move comes after repeated challenges in managing wildlife encroachment. The bill holds political significance. *—PTI*

TVK Chief Vijay launches 'I am coming' campaign

TIRUCHIRAPPALLI, 13 SEPT

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam founder, actor-politician Vijay began his 'I am coming,' statewide campaign here on Saturday for the Tamil Nadu Assembly election due by March-April next year.

The TVK chief is expected to sharpen his attack on the ruling parties at the state and Centre and the party had been taking feedback from office-bearers on talking points relevant to specific regions.

A caravan-like, custom-built campaign vehicle, fitted with a public address system carried Vijay during his campaign.

The campaign bus had brightly painted images of iconic leaders and also featured the campaign slogan of "I am coming."

Vijay addressed rallies here and in nearby Ariyalur and Permbalur districts.

The fledgling party released a campaign logo featuring a smiling Vijay with the slogan

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam Chief and actor Vijay addressing his supporters during a rally in Tiruchirapalli in Tamil Nadu on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

"Unga Vijay Na Varen, Vagai Soodum Varalaru Thirumukirathu (Your Vijay, I am coming; history of victory returns)."

The logo's theme strengthens Vijay's refrain that his party would repeat the history of 1967 and 1977 when the incumbent regimes in Tamil Nadu were dislodged from the

Meanwhile, Vijay received a rousing welcome from his party workers and admirers just before the start of his campaign.

As soon as Vijay arrived at the airport here from Chennai, enthusiastic TVK workers, carrying party flags, pushed away barricades on the airport premises to get a glimpse of their leader.

Vijay's maiden poll campaign threw traffic out of gear in the city causing diversions and inconvenience for the public. *—PTI*

Rahul, UP neta have heated exchange in Raebareli

RAEBARELI, 13 SEPT

A high-level review meeting of key central schemes here saw a heated exchange between Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, and Uttar Pradesh Minister Dinesh Pratap Singh after the latter was told that members must seek the chair's permission before speaking.

A video of the exchange at the 11 September meeting went viral on social media on Friday.

The incident occurred during the District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) meeting held at the Collectorate's Bachat Bhawan. Amethi MP and DISHA co-chairperson Kishori Lal Sharma, several MLAs and block chiefs were also present at the meeting.

The confrontation arose when Singh began directly questioning officials.

Meanwhile, Singh, the minister of state (independent charge) for horticulture, posted a lengthy statement on social media in response to a viral photograph of Gandhi shaking hands with his son, also a local block chief.

Singh alleged that Congress supporters circulated the image to troll him.

The DISHA meeting was boycotted by expelled Samajwadi Party MLA from Unchahar, Manoj Kumar Pandey and Lalganj block head Shivani Singh.

Singh, who was with the Congress, staged a demonstration against Gandhi. *—PTI*

Congress MP Rahul Gandhi chairs DISHA meeting in Raebareli **PHOTO: ANI**

Mann slams buzz on his removal as CM

CHANDIGARH, 13 SEPT

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has dismissed speculations circulating on social media regarding his potential removal from office, asserting, "I will remain at the helm." Speaking to the press, Mann referred to claims made by self-proclaimed "experts" about his position during his recent hospitalisation for exhaustion and a low heart rate.

Mann highlighted comments made by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a visit to the Golden Temple, reiterating his commitment to Mann's leadership. He took aim at the critics, stating, "Former journalists, a former smuggler, a former gangster, a former drug addict... are acting as experts." He advised the public to disregard these "Facebook experts." *—PTI*

MNS leader Mahajan resigns from party

C'SAMBHAJINAGAR, 13 SEPT

Prakash Mahajan, spokesperson for the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) and brother of the late BJP leader Pramod Mahajan, has resigned from the party, claiming he was "ignored" despite minimal expectations of recognition.

In a video message, Mahajan expressed his discontent, stating, "For the past few days, I felt that there is a need to stop at some point... Personally speaking, my expectations are limited. In whichever party I was, I never had a desire to fight elections nor did I want any post. Protecting Hindutva was my only sentiment. But despite keeping my expectations low, I was ignored a lot."

He lamented, "I was never consulted during the Lok Sabha elections. During the assembly polls, I was used only for campaigning... I never received praise for my work, but was blamed for the mistakes that I never committed."

Mahajan also extended an apology to MNS leader Amit Thackeray, acknowledging a promise to support him. He explained his decision to leave the party by citing advancing age and a lack of respect.

Though he has left the MNS, Mahajan clarified he has no intentions of joining another party. *—PTI*

Kerala Oppn attacks CM Vijayan over police conduct

KOCHI, 13 SEPT

Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, VD Satheesan, on Saturday intensified his criticism of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and the state police over reports of alleged custodial torture and the manner in which Kerala Students Union (KSU) activists were produced in a Thrissur court after clashes with the Student Federation of India (SFI).

Satheesan accused the Chief Minister, who also heads the Home Department, of being a mute spectator to "anarchy and atrocities" by the police and of turning the force into a "terrorist organisation" serving CPI(M) interests. *—PTI*

Temples destroyed by invaders must be restored: UP CM

AYODHYA, 13 SEPT

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has called for the restoration of religious sites desecrated during the "barbaric foreign invaders" era, stating it reflects a collective commitment to Sanatan Dharma. His comments came during a programme commemorating the 17th death anniversary of Swami Haryacharya Maharaj at Shri Ayodhya Dham.

Adityanath remarked, "Ayodhya, Kashi, Mathura or any other religious places that were desecrated during the period of slavery must now be reinstated with full respect," asserting that such restoration transcends mere faith, embodying a duty to preserve cultural and spiritual heritage.

CM Yogi Adityanath with BJP MP Trivendra Singh Rawat **PHOTO: PTI**

Reflecting on the longstanding struggle for the Ram temple, he stated, "For 500 years, seers and devotees struggled tirelessly, and today that dream has come true." He underscored the sacrifices made by seers for the cause of Lord Ram's temple, expressing a personal connection to Swami Haryacharya Maharaj and his dedication to the Ram Janmabhoomi and unity within Sanatan Dharma.

Adityanath conveyed the importance of honouring religious symbols alongside national ones. He concluded by emphasising that Sanatan Dharma fosters gratitude and seeks the upliftment of society and the nation. *—PTI*

'DUAL STANDARDS'

Oppn slams BJP, BCCI over India-Pakistan cricket match

MUMBAI, 13 SEPT

Opposition parties in Maharashtra have slammed the BJP and the BCCI over the India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket match scheduled for 14 September, with Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray asking if "blood and cricket can flow together."

The Maharashtra Congress called it an insult to the kin of those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack and soldiers who have been martyred in the line of duty.

The Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) said the government's dual standards had been exposed after it allowed the match to proceed.

Maharashtra minister and cricket administrator Ashish Shelar said international sporting events cannot be dictated by bilateral political stand-offs.

The Opposition called the cricket match between India and Pakistan an insult to the kin of the victims of Pahalgam attack **PHOTO: ANI**

Thackeray said Pakistan has staged multiple terror attacks inside India, and broadcasters in the country should boycott the India-Pakistan match.

Maharashtra Congress spokesperson Sachin Sawant said that allowing the game to go ahead was a diplomatic failure.

BJP minister Shelar, who is also the BCCI's representative on the Asia Cricket Council Board, accused Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Sanjay Raut of adopting an "anti-India" position on the issue. Shiv Sena (UBT) Chief Uddhav Thackeray called it an insult to Indian sentiments. *—PTI*

Markets open after restrictions removed in J&K's Doda

DODA/JAMMU, 13 SEPT

Markets in the district headquarters and other major towns in Doda in Jammu and Kashmir sprang to life on Saturday after the authorities announced a six-hour relaxation in restrictions imposed earlier this week after the detention of sitting AAP MLA Mehraj Malik.

Malik, who is also the chief of AAP's J-K unit, was detained on Monday for allegedly disturbing public order. His detention sparked violent protests, prompting the authorities to impose prohibitory restrictions.

Restrictions were relaxed in Doda, Bhaderwah, and Assar after police and the civil administration held consultations with civil society members and representatives from the local chamber of commerce.

However, gathering of five or more persons are prohibited.

Mobile and broadband internet services will remain suspended to check the spread of fake news.

Meanwhile, the ruling National Conference president Farooq Abdullah expressed hope that the Centre would restore statehood of Jammu and Kashmir.

Security personnel check a commuter's two-wheeler after security was beefed up in Doda in Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

JKNC MLA Tanvir Sadiq said that the Pahalgam terror attack affected the state's tourism industry. He said that hundreds of hotel ancd Shikara booking have been cancelled. *—PTI*

India to buy $4B P-8I planes from US

US defence delegation, Boeing officials to visit India for negotiations to finalise the deal

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

A US delegation will visit India next week for negotiations on selling six more P-8I maritime patrol aircraft to the Indian military as background contacts continue between the two countries to get bilateral relations back after the imposition of additional tariffs on India.

The US team, comprising senior officials of the defence department and Boeing, the manufacturer of the P-8 Poseidon aircraft will visit Delhi during 16 to 19 September for detailed discussions on the current offer.

While the US imposing a 25% punitive levy on Indian goods over purchase of Russian oil has affected bilateral ties, there are signs of the two sides working to repair the relationship.

The delegation will include senior US officials handling relations with India from the office of the undersecretary of defence for policy, Navy International Programs Office (NIPO), Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Aircraft Program Office (PMA 290), and Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), the people said.

The Indian Navy currently has a fleet of 12 P-81 patrol aircrafts operating from Arakkonam and Goa **PHOTO: X**

While the final cost of the six aircrafts is yet to be decide, the deal will cost about $4 billion.

The navy has a fleet of 12 P-8I planes, split into two squadrons operating from Arakkonam and Goa. These planes have advanced the navy's anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare capabilities.

The aircraft were also used in an intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance role during the Doklam and Ladakh standoffs with China.

During Modi and Trump's meeting in Washington on in February, the two sides had spoken of the completion of procurement for additional P-8I maritime patrol aircrafts. The US administration has been pushing Indian to purchase more American military equipment.

The US designated India as a "major defence partner", giving the country licence-free access to a range of military and dual-use technologies.

The US signed three agreements with India for defence cooperation. *—Agencies*

Collabs can beat future threats: Army head

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Indian Navy, highlighted the importance of collaboration in addressing future maritime threats during the commissioning of the latest naval base, INS Aravali, in Gurugram.

In his address, Admiral Tripathi stated, "The threats of tomorrow can only be met by the collaborations we build today." He emphasised that in an increasingly complex maritime environment, "the ability to collect, analyse, and share information in real time will define both deterrence and defence."

INS Aravali will support various information and communication centres crucial to India's command, control and Maritime Domain Awareness framework. The base is a part of the Ministry of Defence's strategy to strengthen maritime safety and security, building on previous developments like the Information Management and Analysis Centre and Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region.

Admiral Tripathi added, "As India moves towards the vision of Viksit Bharat, our maritime interests are set to increase manifold." He underscored the role of INS Aravali in bolstering India's stature as a security partner and guiding the navy towards a network-centric future. *—PTI*

HP doc bags US patent for device to treat critically ill

SHIMLA, 13 SEPT

Bal Chander, professor of pathology at Dr Rajender Prasad Medical College in Kangra in Himachal Pradesh, has received a US patent for his "Blood Analysis System" (BAS), a device for real-time monitoring and treatment of critically ill patients. Inspired by the untimely deaths of his teacher and a school friend, Chander developed the project in a year without external funding. The European Patent Office has also ratified its components and originality. BAS continuously measures dozens of blood molecules and ions without taking blood, providing instant results. It can also selectively correct abnormal levels without drugs. Hailing from f Shimla, Chander is an alumnus of AIIMS, New Delhi. *—PTI*

Tripura bank cashier held in Rs 16 cr fraud case

AGARTALA, 13 SEPT

A cashier at UCO Bank's Agartala branch has been arrested for allegedly siphoning off Rs 16 crore from the Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC) using forged cheques, officials said on Saturday. The accused, Ramayani Shrimayi, a resident of Nagaon, Assam, was detained on Friday night and will be produced before a local court, according to Sadar SDPO DP Roy. The bank lodged a complaint with West Agartala police on 5 September after confirming unauthorised withdrawals. West Tripura SP Namit Pathak has set up a special investigating team to investigate. Six cloned cheques were used between 5 August and 2 September. Around Rs 7 crore was recovered through online transaction tracing. *—PTI*

A truck hangs precariously from the edge of a road after a landslide at Sangla in Kinnaur district in Himachal Pradesh on Saturday **PHOTO: PTI**

Cloudburst in HP; vehicles buried, farms damaged

SHIMLA, 13 SEPT

Several vehicles were buried under debris, and farms were damaged due to a cloudburst in Himachal Pradesh's Bilaspur district on Saturday. However, no casualty was reported.

The cloudburst occurred in Gutrahan village in the Namhol area of Naina Devi assembly constituency.

Gushing waters carrying debris scattered all over agricultural lands, said Kashmir Singh.

Meanwhile, fog engulfed Shimla, reducing visibility to about a few metres and people commuting in vehicles faced inconvenience during school time. A yellow alert was issued in isolated parts of the state for the next two days.

A total of 503 roads, including Attari-Leh road (National Highway-3), Aut-Sainj road (NH-305) and Amritsar-Bhota road (NH-503A), were closed for traffic in the state on 12 September.

About 953 power transformers and 336 water supply schemes were disrupted in the state due to rains and landslides.

A total of 386 people have died in rain-related incidents and road accidents since the onset of the monsoon over the state on June 20 till September 12. Out of the 386 people, 218 died in rain-related incidents, while 168 were killed in road accidents.

The state has suffered a loss of Rs 4,465 crore due to damages caused by rains this year.

Himachal Pradesh received an average rainfall of 967.2 mm from June 1 to September 12 against the normal of 678.4 mm, an excess of 43 per cent, according to the meteorological data. *—PTI*

Fired worker kills Hyderabad bizman

HYDERABAD, 13 SEPT

A real estate businessman, Srikanth Reddy, has been stabbed to death in full public view in Moulali in Telangana's Hyderabad .

The victim, a resident of HB Colony, was allegedly attacked by a former employee, Dhanraj of Lalapet, who had been dismissed from his job about 20 days ago.

Dhanraj, hailing from Lalapet, used to come to the office in an inebriated state and cause trouble, due to which his employment was terminated. Despite being dismissed, Dhanraj visited Srikanth's office repeatedly, pressuring him to reinstate him.

The incident occurred on 13 September when Dhanraj, along with friend Daniel, met Srikanth at his office and borrowed Rs 1,200 to buy alcohol. After drinking, the duo returned to the office and Dhanraj demanded a job. Srikanth asked him to return on another day.

The accused Dhanraj visited Reddy's office demanding a job. When he was asked to return later his friend stabbed the latter **PHOTO: X**

As Dhanraj did not relent, Srikanth decided to leave the office. As he stepped out, the two men followed him and attacked him with a knife. Prodded by Dhanraj, Daniel stabbed Srikanth to death in the lane in front of his office. Then they fled from the scene.

A case was registered and a manhunt was launched. *—PTI*

Case filed in HC bomb threat

MUMBAI, 13 SEPT

Mumbai police have registered a case against unidentified persons in connection with the bomb threat email sent to the Bombay High Court, an official said on Saturday.

A case has been registered at Azad Maidan police station under section 353 (1) (whoever makes, publishes or circulates any statement, false information, rumour, or report, including through electronic means) and other relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

The police were trying to trace the sender's IP address and location. The bomb threat turned out to be a hoax. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

2 Naxalites with Rs16L bounty killed in Chattisgarh

BIJAPUR, 13 SEPT

Two Naxalites carrying a combined bounty of Rs 16 lakh were killed in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, police said on Saturday. Hidma Podiyam, 34 and Munna Madkam, 25, members of military platoon no.1 of the banned CPI (Maoists), were shot dead by a District Reserve Guard team in the district's south-western forests on Friday, according to SP Jitendra Kumar Yadav. A .303 rifle, a 12-bore gun, ammunition, batteries, cordex wire, a scanner set and Maoist literature were seized from the site. The clash follows a major operation on 11 September in which top Maoist leader Modem Balakrishna and nine cadres were gunned down. *—PTI*

Ex-IPS officer, wife booked for forgery in UP

LUCKNOW, 13 SEPT

Former IPS officer Amitabh Thakur and his wife Nutan have been booked for alleged forgery, cheating, and misuse of official position related to a two-decade-old industrial plot allotment case in Deoria, Uttar Pradesh.

The complaint, lodged by Alok Kumar Srivastava, accuses Nutan of fabricating documents to unlawfully secure an industrial plot in 1999, with Amitabh allegedly abusing his position as Superintendent of Police to influence the process.

The couple, claiming the allegations are "politically motivated" and a "case of vendetta," vowed to prove their innocence. They stated, "We are fully confident that we will soon prove our innocence in this matter with facts."

An FIR has been filed at Talkatora police station under IPC Sections 420, 467, 468, 471, and 120B, with an investigation underway. *—PTI*

Honeymoon murder: Sonam files for bail

SHILLONG, 13 SEPT

Sonam Raghuvanshi, accused of murdering her husband Raja during their honeymoon in Meghalaya, filed a bail petition.

The judicial magistrate first class of Sohra sub-division fixed 17 September for hearing her petition.

The petition was filed on 12 September, but the prosecution sought time to examine the case records.

Sonam's counsel has claimed "flaws" in the charge sheet filed in the murder of Indore-based businessman Raja Raghuvanshi.

Raja Raghuvanshi was murdered by three hitmen at a secluded parking lot near Weisawdong in Sohra while he was on his honeymoon in the state. His wife and her boyfriend, Raj Kushwaha, allegedly planned the murder.

Raja and Sonam went missing from Meghalaya in May, triggering a nationwide search operation. Eventually, Raja's body was found, and Sonam surrendered before the police in UP.

The police last week submitted a 790-page charge sheet against Sonam, Raj, and the three hitme. *—PTI*

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S HEALTH

BHOPAL, 13 SEPT

Social media influencers will be roped in to spread awareness about the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan to be launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Madhya Pradesh's Dhar on his birthday on 17 September.

Podcaster Nidhi Kaushik, RJ Anadi Tiwari, Podcaster Nayan Rai, RJ Parul, Nidhi Rawatiya, Siddarth Jain, Youth4Children volunteers, AIR anchors, RJs from Radio LakeCityVoice and Doordarshan professionals were among the influencers who took part in a meet

PHOTO: FREEPIK

organised by National Health Mission (NHM) and UNICEF Madhya Pradesh here.

NHM Mission Director Saloni Sidana said the campaign will take place between 17 September and 2 October at 'Ayushman Arogya Mandirs' (Health and Wellness Centres).

"It will prioritise women's health with a focus on mental health, gender equity, adolescent anaemia management and active lifestyles," she stated.

Rachana Dubey, director of the NHM's Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Bureau, said many adolescents suffer from Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS) without realising it, and urged them to undergo screening during the campaign. "We are developing centres to provide treatment services," she said while asking influencers to promote the campaign. *—PTI*

M'rashtra woman assaults employer over harassment

THANE, 13 SEPT

A 22-year-old woman reportedly assaulted her employer after alleging harassment at his store in the Kalyan East area of Maharashtra's Thane district on Thursday evening.

The incident, which has drawn attention on social media, shows the woman, armed with a slipper, confronting and striking the 55-year-old shopkeeper.

The woman claims her employer had been sending her obscene messages on her mobile phone, prompting her to seek an apology. Eyewitnesses reported that the woman arrived at the shop with her mother, confronting the employer about his behaviour.

While the police are investigating the incident, no formal case has been registered as of yet. The local authorities are looking into the circumstances surrounding the allegations—*PTI*

PHOTO: REEPIK

M'rashtra man gets 10 yrs in jail for sexual assault

THANE, 13 SEPT

A court in Maharashtra's Thane district has sentenced a 32-year-old man to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting an 11-year-old girl in 2018. Additional Sessions Judge DS Deshmukh on Friday convicted Santosh Bhimrao Wankhede. He was fined Rs 50,000, to be paid to the survivor after the appeal period, and the case was referred to the District Legal Services Authority for additional compensation. Wankhede abducted the girl from her home on took her to a hill and assaulted her, and threatened her brothers. *—PTI*

2 RAPE ACCUSED'S HOMES DEMOLISHED

BHOPAL, 13 SEPT

In a crackdown on illegal constructions, the homes of two men arrested for the alleged rape and blackmail of college students were demolished in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal on Saturday.

"Unauthorised houses of Shamsuddin aka Saad and Sahil Khan were demolished, while action against the house of another accused, Farhan Ali, will be taken after his court hearing," an official confirmed. The operation began around 5am, following the placement of barricades the previous evening, and was conducted with a heavy police presence.

PHOTO: PTI

The accused—Farhan Ali, Saad, Sahil Khan, Nabeel, Ali Khan, and Abrar— were charged with raping students and blackmailing them with objectionable videos. *—PTI*

1ST WOMAN PM

Nepal PM shares deep Varanasi connect

VARANASI, 13 SEPT

Former Chief Justice of Nepal Sushila Karki, 73, who has now become the country's first woman Prime Minister to head an interim government, shares a strong bond with Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi.

Karki, who described herself as a "friend of India", pursued her post-graduation from the Banaras Hindu University in Varanasi, where she met her life partner, Durga Prasad Subedi.

"Karki did an MA in political science from BHU in 1975. Back then, Varanasi was the centre of the anti-monarchy movement in Nepal," said Dipak Malik, a former professor of political science at the BHU said.

Karki, too, got associated with the movement. Renowned writer and Nepal's former prime miniter, BP Koirala was also active in Varanasi during the same time.

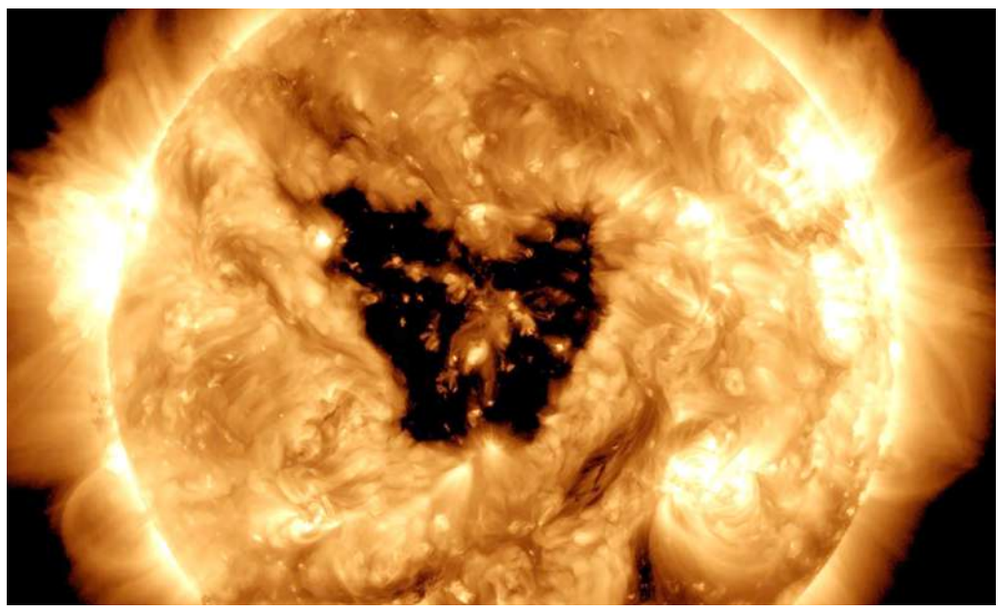
Sushila Karki was sworn in as the interim Prime Minister of Nepal at a ceremony in Kathmandu on 12 September **PHOTO: PTI**

He described Karki as a "very honest and capable leader" and asserted that her election as the interim PM of Nepal is a significant milestone in the country's history

Malik observed that Nepalese youth have raised questions on corruption and economic inequality and said that these issues need to be addressed.

Karki on Friday took charge as Nepal's Prime Minister, ending days of political uncertainty after the K P Sharma Oli dispensation was forced to quit in the face of a nationwide agitation triggered by a social media ban.

Nepali President Ramchandra Paudel said the new caretaker government is mandated to hold fresh parliamentary elections within six months. Karki was chosen to lead the country after a meeting between Paudel, Nepal's top military brass, and the youth protesters. *—PTI*



BUTTERFLY 'HOLE' IN SUN

A colossal butterfly-shaped coronal hole has opened in the sun's atmosphere and is currently spewing solar wind toward Earth. This could trigger a moderate geomagnetic storm and dazzling auroras this weekend. The high-speed solar wind from the hole which is some 5,00,000 km across, is expected to reach Earth around 14 September

PHOTO: NASA

Land subsidence crushes hopes & dreams in Jammu

Mohammad Javaid sits desolate under the fragile cover of a tent, unable to comprehend how he ended up in this situation. A little over a week ago, he was living with his family of six in his dream home.

But in a cruel turn of fate, his two-storeyed house in Khari village in Jammu and Kashmir, built only a year and a half ago, developed cracks due to land subsidence.

The house built from savings, made painstakingly through years of hard labour, has now collapsed, putting his family in a precarious place.

"For the past six to seven days, the land in our village has been sinking. It started with small cracks in our houses after the rains stopped around 3 September, but now there are four to five-foot deep cracks in the earth," Javaid tells PTI.

Eyes brimming with tears, he adds, "I spent lakhs of rupees building this house with every penny I saved. My house has gone. Now everything is completely destroyed. We sleep in our farm land under tarpaulins, covering our goods and family when the rains come."

Javaid says their survival solely depends on the support of the government and his fellow villagers. "The administration has given us tents, but it's no substitute for a home. Nearly 20 to 25 houses here are completely damaged."

Across the Jammu region, land subsidence has been reported at 19 places in Ramban, Kishtwar, Poonch, Reasi, and Kathua districts. This follows heavy rains and flash floods at the end of August that displaced over 2,500 to 3,000 people in J&K.

Those who lost their homes and livelihoods now appeal to the government for urgent relief and permanent rehabilitation.

Khari lies on mountainous terrain, and is called the green engine of Jammu due to its lush green cover. The village is 15 km from Jammu, the city of temples.

Now Khari wears the look of a place devastated by an earthquake, with some houses sunk into the land, collapsed roofs and walls. Across a vast patch of land, residents have set up tents. With no power and water supply, and road connectivity disrupted due to the recent floods, several families spend long hours sitting on beds in the open under the shade of trees.

Across the Jammu region, land subsidence has been reported at 19 places in Ramban, Kishtwar, Poonch, Reasi, and Kathua districts. This follows heavy rains and flash floods at the end of August ***PHOTO: PTI***

Gulam Mohammad (69) and his seven family members say they fear that the ground could give way at any moment. "My house collapsed and sank into the earth after the surrounding land submerged five to six feet deep on 5 September," he says.

"Every day the land sinks more. The tents and rations we received from the administration help, but living here is too risky. We want the government to relocate us to safer places," he says.

Mehram Bibi recalls how her house sank within minutes on 6 September. "All our household goods were buried," she says. Bibi, whose two sons and their families lost their home, says there is no electricity or water supply, and the roads have been damaged. "We survive on rations from the Army and some kind people who offer food. But how long can we endure this?" she asked.

Muskaan, 35, says the construction of her house was nearing completion when the land around the house collapsed. "We were about to move in."

"I have sent my family to a relative's home. We have lost everything. Now we are out on the streets," she wept, holding her child close.

The ground has been sinking for days in Khari and Kanger panchayats of Bantalab area, Lower and Upper Bermini, Guraa, Chaata, Undue Sarari in the Sidhra-Bajalta belt on the outskirts of Jammu city, leading to deep cracks in at least 100 houses.

All affected families have been shifted to temporary tents. Officials suspect that excessive water saturation caused by torrential rains led to the subsidence in parts that are on hilly terrain.

Experts are expected to inspect the site soon to assess the situation further.

Over 50 houses in the mountainous Bermini area suffered damage since 30 August.

"Most houses either have cracks, are partially crumbling, or are sinking entirely into the earth. Security personnel have been deployed to prevent villagers from re-entering their unsafe homes, which are spread over 800 to 900 kanals of land," an official says.

Razvi Bibi, whose house was destroyed, says, "With great difficulty, I managed to salvage a few household items. We have lost everything. We live in the open with our cattle now."

Maqbool, forced to abandon his home along with many families in Lower Bermini hamlet, says, "Over 50 homes within just 1 km have collapsed since 31 August."

Abdullah Hamid's cattle shed also sank, burying all his cattle. "We managed to escape with our lives, but now we are living in a school building with no place for our cattle. We urgently need rehabilitation," he said. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

Labourer to 4-time M'laya CM, Lapang still inspires

From breaking stones as a road labourer in rural Ri Bhoi to occupying the chief minister's chair four times, Dr Donwa Dethwelson Lapang's life was a saga of resilience and determination that continues to inspire generations in Meghalaya.

Fondly called Maheh, Lapang's journey epitomised the rise of a grassroots leader.

Born in 1934 to Donwas War and Elsibon Lapang at Nongpoh, he grew up in humble circumstances, helping his mother run a tea stall at Iew Mawlong and Umsning while supplementing the family income as a daily wage worker on road projects.

Despite hardships, Lapang pursued education with grit, completing his matriculation from Government High School, Shillong, and later graduating through evening classes at St. Anthony's College.

Alongside, he worked as a teacher, a typist in the Assam Secretariat, and even rose to become a sub-inspector of schools before stepping into politics.

His political career began in 1972 when he was elected from Nongpoh in the first Assembly of the newly created Meghalaya.

He went on to represent the constituency for decades, winning multiple elections and carving out a niche as a patient negotiator and accessible leader.

One of his landmark contributions was the creation of Ri Bhoi district in 1992, a long-cherished aspiration of the people of the region.

His role in strengthening the Congress organisation in the hill state also earned him prominence in state and national politics.

Lapang served as chief minister on four occasions between 1992 and 2009, often called upon to steer Meghalaya through periods of political flux.

Dr Donwa Dethwelson Lapang ***PHOTO: PTI***

His terms in office were marked by efforts to strengthen rural connectivity, promote education and balance diverse interests in the coalition-driven politics of the state.

Known for his gentle humour, humility and simplicity, Lapang never forgot his roots. Even in power, he remained accessible to common citizens, often hosting them at his Nongpoh residence.

In later years, he parted ways with the Congress and joined the National People's Party, serving as advisor to the state government before stepping down.

Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma described Lapang as "a true leader of the people whose commitment to public service spanned decades."

"Deeply saddened by the passing of Former Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya, Dr. DD Lapang. Maheh Lapang was a true leader of the people whose commitment to public service spanned decades," Sangma stated.

According to the chief minister, Lapang's role in shaping Ri Bhoi District remains unforgettable, and he continues to be revered as one of its own by the people there.

"A statesman with a heart to serve, his legacy will live on in the lives he touched and the path he paved for Meghalaya's future. I join the people of the state in offering my deepest condolences to his family and loved ones. Rest in peace, dearest Maheh," Sangma said.

Former Union Minister and state Congress chief Vincent H Pala also recalled Lapang's role as a mentor and guide.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of Dr. DD Lapang, former CM of Meghalaya. A mentor and father figure to many of us in Congress, his guidance and legacy will always inspire. My heartfelt condolences to his family. May his soul rest in peace," Pala said.

Beyond politics, Lapang was remembered as a family man who married Amethyst Lynda Jomes Blah in 1958 and raised two children.

His personal journey — from labourer to lawmaker — continues to resonate in the collective memory of the people.

The state government has announced a three-day state mourning beginning Saturday, during which the national flag will fly at half-mast. A state funeral will be accorded to the former chief minister on Monday, according to a senior government official.

As Meghalaya mourns, tributes pour in not only for a leader who held the highest office but for a man who never let power erase the modesty of his beginnings.

—PTI

In this 2010 file photo, then Congress president Sonia Gandhi has a word with former Meghalaya chief minister DD Lapang ***PHOTO: GOVT OF MEGHALAYA***

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

What a leaked plan tells us about Trump's strategy for Gaza

Entire neighbourhoods in Gaza lie in ruins. Hundreds of thousands are crammed into tents, struggling for food, water and power.

Despite this devastation, a leaked 38-page document from Donald Trump's administration – the Gaza Reconstitution, Economic Acceleration and Transformation (Great) Trust – proposes to "fundamentally transform Gaza" folding it into the India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor (Imec).

While framed as a reconstruction plan, it outlines "massive US gains," Imec's acceleration, and consolidation of an "Abrahamic regional architecture" – a term that refers back to the 2020 Abraham Accords, US-brokered agreements that normalised relations between Israel, the UAE and Bahrain.

In many respects, the document echoes the "Gaza 2035" plan promoted by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. This was the 2024 proposal that envisioned Gaza as a sanitised logistics hub linked to Saudi Arabia's Neom mega-project and stripped of meaningful Palestinian presence.Imec was launched at the 2023 G20 summit in New Delhi. Signed by the US, EU, India, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, it was billed as a transformative infrastructure project. It comprised a chain of railways, ports, pipelines and digital cables linking South Asia to Europe via the Arabian Peninsula.

Israel was not formally a signatory, but its role was implicit. The corridor runs from Indian ports to the UAE, overland through Saudi Arabia and Jordan to the Haifa Port in Israel, then across the Mediterranean to Greece and Europe.

Like many such mega-projects, Imec is marketed in the language of efficiency – faster trade times, lower costs, new energy and data corridors. But its deeper significance is political. For Washington it serves as a counterweight to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Europe views it as a hedge against the Suez Canal and Russian pipelines.

The Gulf monarchies see a chance to position themselves as the region's main centre for trade and transport. Israel promotes Haifa as a gateway for Euro-Asian trade. India, meanwhile, gains quicker access to Europe while tightening its ties with both Washington and the Gulf.

While framed as a reconstruction plan, it outlines 'massive US gains', Imec's acceleration, and consolidation of an 'Abrahamic regional architecture' – a term that refers back to the 2020 Abraham Accords ***PHOTO: PTI***

Gaza as obstacle and gateway

The plan casts Gaza both as an Iranian outpost undermining Imec and as a historic crossroads of trade routes linking Egypt, Arabia, India and Europe.

By invoking Gaza's history as a trading route, the plan presents the territory as a natural logistics gateway poised to "thrive once again" at the centre of a "pro-American regional order".

The blueprint proposes extending Gaza's port from Egypt's al-Arish, integrating its industries into regional supply chains, and reorganising its land into "planned cities" and digital economies.

What is being imagined is not recovery for its residents, but the conversion of Gaza into a logistics centre serving Imec.

Perhaps the most radical element of the Great Trust is its model of direct trusteeship. The plan envisions a US-led custodianship, beginning with a bilateral US–Israel agreement and eventually expanding into a multilateral trust. This body would govern Gaza, oversee security, manage aid and control redevelopment. After a "Palestinian polity" is established, the trust would still retain powers through a Compact of Free Association.

Even the most ill-fated US occupation plans in Iraq and Afghanistan did not so openly imagine territory as a corporatised trusteeship for global capital.

'Voluntary' relocation

Another striking feature of the plan is its provision for "voluntary relocation." Palestinians who leave their homes in Gaza would receive relocation packages, rent subsidies and food stipends. The document assumes a quarter of the population will depart permanently, with financial models showing how the scheme becomes more profitable the more people leave.

In reality, the notion of voluntary departure under siege and famine is not voluntary at all. Israel's blockade has produced what UN officials describe as engineered mass starvation.

The plan also shows how the language of the Abraham Accords has been grafted onto Gaza's imagined future. Nearly every element is dressed in "Abrahamic" branding: an Abraham gateway logistics hub in Rafah, an Abrahamic infrastructure corridor of railways, even new highways renamed after Saudi and Emirati leaders.

Techno-futurist gloss is added through smart manufacturing zones, AI-regulated data centres, luxury resorts and new digital-ID cities, planned "smart cities" where daily life would be mediated through ID-based digital systems.

Saudi Arabia and fig leaf of Palestinian statehood

A central ambition of the Great Trust is to channel Gulf capital into Gaza's redevelopment under its trusteeship. The plan forecasts US$70–100 billion (£50-£74 billion) in public investment and another $35–65 billion from private investors, with public–private partnerships financing ports, rail, hospitals and data centres.

Saudi Arabia, though not formally part of the Abraham Accords, signalled its acceptance of the overall framework when it backed Imec. For Washington, Gaza's reconstruction is imagined as the final step in persuading Riyadh to make normalisation official – a prize that would anchor the "Abrahamic order".

The Trump plan is designed to smooth this path, offering Saudi Arabia a custodial role in Gaza's redevelopment and lucrative stakes in Imec. To make the deal more palatable, it even floats the idea of a Palestinian "polity" – a limited governance entity under trusteeship.

While such an arrangement may be billed as a step towards Palestinian statehood recognition by Saudi Arabia, this is precisely why any future gestures of recognition must be treated with caution. The real question is what, exactly, is being recognised, and in whose interest.

The Great Trust is, at its core, an investment prospectus. The document values Gaza today at "practically $0" – but projects it could be worth $324 billion within a decade.

Yet visions of free-trade zones and futuristic cities quickly collide with reality. Palestinians have consistently rejected such schemes. What this leaked document makes clear, however, is that Gaza's future is being framed within this broader US effort to reshape the region. *—The Conversation*

Pak army says at least 12 soldiers, 35 terrorists killed

PESHAWAR, 13 SEPT

The Pakistan army said at least 12 soldiers and 35 terrorists allegedly belonging to the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have been killed in two separate operations in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military's media wing, said on Saturday that the operations were conducted in the last four days. An intelligence-based operation was conducted by the security forces in Bajaur district and in an intense exchange of fire, 22 terrorists belonging to the TTP were killed, it said. In another encounter that took place in South Waziristan district, 13 TTP terrorists were neutralised and 12 soldiers lost their lives in the intense exchange of fire, the ISPR said. *—PTI*

UN aims to relocate displaced Syrians

BEIRUT, 12 SEPT

The United Nations is working to relocate displaced Syrians from schools in Sweida province to alternative housing before the new school year begins. This area recently experienced violent sectarian clashes between Sunni Bedouin clans and Druze sect members, resulting in hundreds of civilian deaths and over 187,000 people displaced. "The last thing Syria needs is to see more camps going up," said Adam Abdelmoula, the UN's humanitarian coordinator for Syria. He noted, however, that relocating displaced individuals to public buildings or providing subsidised rentals is feasible. Despite improvements in humanitarian access since last December, funding for relief efforts has reached a record low this year, hindering aid efforts. *—PTI*

US awards contract to study vaccine autism 'link'

NEW YORK, 13 SEPT

Federal health officials intend to award a contract to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute to investigate whether there is a link between vaccinations and autism, according to a government procurement notice. The Troy, New York, engineering school is getting the no-bid contract because of its "unique ability" to link data on children and mothers, according to the notice posted this week. US Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr, a leading voice in the antivaccine movement. He has repeatedly tried to link vaccines to the condition. An RPI biotech engineering professor, Juergen Hahn, who has used artificial intelligence and machine learning techniques to look for patterns in blood samples of children with autism, is expected to lead the probe. *—PTI*

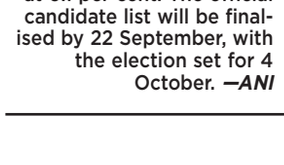


PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Takaichi leads Japan's LDP President race

TOKYO, 13 SEPT

Sanae Takaichi, Japan's former economic security minister, has emerged as the frontrunner in the race to become the next president of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), according to a Kyodo News poll. In a telephone survey, 28 per cent of respondents identified Takaichi as the most suitable candidate, followed by Agriculture Minister Shinjiro Koizumi at 22.5 per cent . Former prime minister Shigeru Ishiba announced his resignation on 10 September. The competition includes Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi at 11.4 per cent and former foreign minister Toshimitsu Motegi at 6.1 per cent. The official candidate list will be finalised by 22 September, with the election set for 4 October. *—ANI*

Nepal parties, lawyers slam dissolution of Parl

They call the move unconstitutional, ironic and arbitrary

KATHMANDU, 13 SEPT

Nepal's major political parties and apex lawyers' body have strongly criticised the President's decision to dissolve Parliament, describing the move as "unconstitutional", "arbitrary" and a serious blow to democracy.

The criticism followed Friday's recommendation by the first Cabinet meeting chaired by interim Prime Minister Sushila Karki to dissolve the House of Representatives, a proposal that President Ram Chandra Paudel promptly approved.

The house was dissolved with effect from 11pm on 12 September, according to a notice by the President's Office.

Disapproving of the move, Nepali Congress (NC), the largest political party of the country, warned that any action violating the Constitution would be unacceptable.

The Central Executive Committee meeting of the NC held on Saturday concluded that the dissolution of the Parliament has "jeopardised the democratic achievements" of the country.

"This move.... is against the spirit of our Constitution and the interpretation of the Supreme Court," the NC said in a statement.

Other parties, such as the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist–Leninist), the CPN (Maoist Centre) equally condemned the move. CPN-UML General Secretary Shankar Pokharel described the move as "ironically concerning".

Similarly, the Nepal Bar Association (NBA) said the "arbitrary" dissolution undermines constitutional supremacy and "strikes at the core of constitutionalism".

"The President's decision.... contradicts the Supreme Court's earlier ruling on the reinstatement of Parliament," the NBA said.

The house was dissolved on 12 September PHOTO: PTI

IMPORTANT LEGAL NEARLY DOCUS DESTROYED

Nepal's Supreme Court has said that important documents forming part of the country's judicial history were nearly destroyed in the recent student-led anti-government protests.

"We pledge to resume court operations at the earliest to address citizens' expectations of justice," Chief Justice Prakashman Singh Raut said.

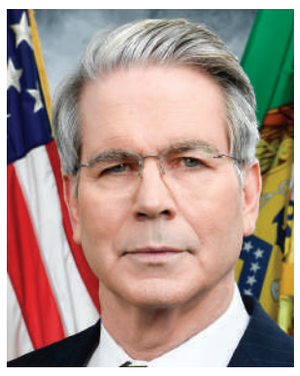
Important documents integral to Nepal's judicial history nearly destroyed in the violence, he said. *—PTI*

Discord, an app used to elect the interim PM

Gen-Z protesters in Nepal voted on social media messaging platform Discord to elect Sushila Karki as the interim PM. The platform, launched in 2015, was originally meant as for gamers. It allows users to send messages or call each other, or on community servers, which can hold 5,00,000 people. The demonstrators used the platform during their protests, and after former PM Oli Sharma resigned and fled the country, they held polls on the Youth Against Corruption server (consisting of roughly 130,000 members) to elect the Karki. However, it cannot be verified if all the members were inside Nepal.

UNITED FRONT

US asks G7 to impose tariffs on Russian oil buyers



US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent; Canada's Finance Minister François-Philippe Champagne. Canada heads the G7 PHOTO: X

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 13 SEPT

The US has asked G7 countries to impose tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia, asserting that only "unified efforts" that cut off funding to Moscow's war machine at source can apply sufficient pressure to end "the senseless killing."

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and the United States Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer were on a call with G7 Finance Ministers on Friday when they reiterated President Donald Trump's call to the bloc's partners about imposing tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia.

François-Philippe Champagne, Canada's Minister of Finance and National Revenue, chaired a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers to discuss further measures to increase pressure on Russia to end its war against Ukraine.

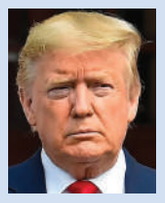
The G7 comprises of the US, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the UK.

"Bessent reiterated Trump's call to our G7 partners that, if they are truly committed to ending the war in Ukraine, they should join the US in imposing tariffs on countries purchasing oil from Russia," said a US Treasure Department statement.

The statement did not name any country. But the US has often blamed India and China for purchasing Russian oil.

The G7 did not confirm if they would oblige, but Champagne said that, "G7 Ministers agreed to accelerate discussions to further use immobilised Russian sovereign assets". *—PTI*

DON: TARIFFS CAUSED A 'RIFT' WITH INDIA



Trump stated in a Fox News interview that the tariffs on India caused a "rift" with New Delhi and admitted that the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which he had expected to be the easiest to resolve, remains unresolved. "India was their [Russia's] biggest customer, I put 50 per cent tariff on India buying oil from Russia. That is a big deal and causes rift with India," Trump said. "I thought easiest would be Ukraine and Russia... This is the only war that I have not solved."

UN backs two-state solution for Palestine

UNITED NATIONS, 13 SEPT

The UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Friday to support a two-state solution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict and urge Israel to commit to a Palestinian state.

The 193-member world body approved a nonbinding resolution endorsing the "New York Declaration," which sets out a phased plan to end the nearly 80-year conflict.

The vote was 142-10 with 12 abstentions.

Hours before the vote, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, "There will be no Palestinian state."

The resolution was sponsored by France and Saudi Arabia, who co-chaired a high-level conference on implementing a two-state solution in late July, where the declaration was approved.

Riyad Mansour, the Palestinian UN ambassador, said the support for the resolution reflects "the yearning of almost everyone to open the door for the option of peace."

But Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon dismissed the resolution as "theatre".

The UNGA decision was backed by 142 member states. Israel termed the rulling as disgraceful, while killing at least 32 people in Gaza PHOTO: UN

The United States, Israel's closest ally, reiterated its opposition to the New York Declaration and the General Assembly resolution.

It "is yet another misguided and ill-timed publicity stunt" US Mission unsellor Morgan Ortagas said.

The declaration condemns the 7 Oct attack and said that "In the context of ending the war in Gaza, Hamas must end its rule in Gaza and hand over its weapons to the Palestinian Authority."

It equally condemns Israel's attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure in Gaza and its "siege and starvation".

India, which was one of the first non-Arab states to recognise a Palestinian state, also voted in favour of the two-state solution. *—PTI*

Can't change that Osama was killed in Pak: Israel

UNITED NATIONS, 13 SEPT

Pakistan cannot change the fact that Al-Qaida chief Osama bin Laden killed on its soil, Israel said, as it lashed out at Islamabad in the UNSC for its "double standards". "When bin Laden was eliminated in Pakistan," Israel's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Danny Danon said, pointing his hand towards Pakistan's UN Ambassador, "the question asked was not 'why target a terrorist on foreign soil'?... There can be no immunity for Hamas". Pakistan had questioned the legality of Israel's strikes in Doha. *—PTI*

193 people killed in boat accidents in Congo

KINSHASA, 13 SEPT

At least 193 people have died in two separate boat accidents in northwestern Congo this week, with many more presumed missing, according to local authorities and state media reports.

The incidents occurred on Wednesday and Thursday, approximately 150km apart in the Equateur province. On Thursday evening, a whaleboat carrying nearly 500 passengers caught fire and capsized on the Congo River in Lukolela territory. The Congolese humanitarian affairs ministry reported that 209 survivors were rescued near the village of Malange.

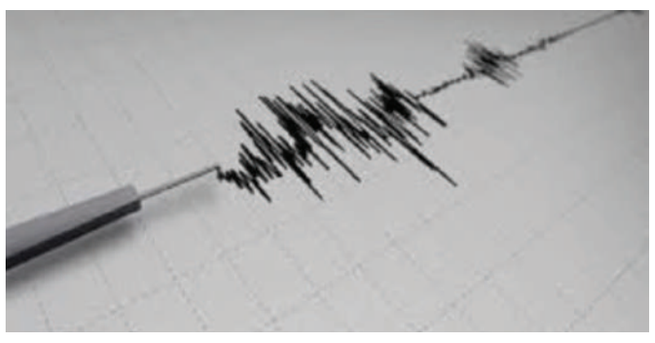
The previous day, a motorised boat capsized in Basankusu territory, resulting in the deaths of at least 86 individuals, predominantly students. While several were reported missing, exact numbers were not available.

The state media attributed Wednesday's calamity to "improper loading and night navigation." Images from the scene depicted villagers mourning over the deceased. A local civil society group held the government accountable, claiming that the death toll was even higher than reported.

Boat capsizings have surged in this central African nation as people forsake inadequate roadways for overloaded wooden vessels, often travelling at night and lacking life jackets, compounding the risks involved in such journeys. *—PTI*

They happened on Wednesday and Thursday PHOTO: X

7.4 MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE STRIKES NEAR RUSSIA'S KAMCHATKA COAST



MOSCOW, 13 SEPT

A powerful 7.4 magnitude earthquake struck early Saturday near the east coast of Russia's Kamchatka region, according to the US Geological Survey. The epicenter was located 111.7km east of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky at a depth of 39km. There are no immediate reports of injuries or significant damage. The Pacific Tsunami Warning System initially warned of a potential tsunami, but subsequently removed the threat from its website. The Japan Meteorological Agency issued alerts to coastal areas regarding slight changes in sea levels, indicating that the likelihood of damage remains minimal.

It's noteworthy that the Kamchatka Peninsula experienced five strong quakes previously, the most significant being a 7.4 magnitude on 20 July 2025. *—PTI*

AFTER KIRK'S ASSASSINATION

Hoax threat calls to US colleges keep students on the edge

MISSION, 13 SEPT

Around 50 college campuses across the US have been deluged in recent weeks with hoax calls about armed gunmen and other violence, laying bare the challenges of detecting fake threats quickly to prevent mass panic.

Students at some schools spent hours hiding under desks, only to find out later it was someone's idea of entertainment. On Thursday, several historically Black colleges locked down or cancelled classes after receiving threats, at a time when the fatal shooting of conservative activist Charlie Kirk at a Utah college had campuses newly on edge.

"We have so many mass shootings in this country and so many young people die," said Wendy Via, co-founder and CEO of the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism. "And so you can't just blow it off because there has been a bunch of hoaxes." The FBI is investigating, but so far there have been no arrests.

The worry is that hoaxes will create complacency at campuses where active shooter alerts and drills have become a regular part of life.

"I hope we're not desensitised enough to the point where we don't take these alerts seriously anymore," said Miceala Morano, a 21-year-old senior journalism major, who took cover after a recent threat at the University of Arkansas.

"Unfortunately, it still is a very real possibility," Morano said.

The goal of swatting is to get authorities, particularly a SWAT team, to respond to an address and has roots in fake bomb threats that have been around for decades.

Cops rushed to UMass Boston after a false reports of shots fired PHOTO: X

Dispatch call centres often are the last lines of defence to swatters, a burden in an era of mass shootings, including one this week at a suburban Denver high school and another two weeks ago at a Catholic church in Minneapolis that killed two schoolchildren and injured 21 people. *—PTI*

KIRK'S WIDOW ERIKA THANKS FIRST RESPONDERS

Erika Kirk, widow of conservative activist Charlie Kirk, made her first public remarks on Friday, two days after her husband was fatally shot while speaking at Utah Valley University. Standing next to his empty studio chair Erika thanked first responders and the countless supporters who have rallied behind her family since the tragic event. She also expressed deep gratitude to President Donald Trump and Vice President JD Vance for their support. "Mr. President, my husband loved you," she declared, acknowledging the bond Charlie had with the two men.

Crisil projects headline inflation at 3.2% for '25-26

KOLKATA, 13 SEPT

Research and ratings firm Crisil said that the headline inflation during 2025-26 is projected to be 3.2 per cent, lower than its earlier estimate of 3.5 per cent.

In its latest report, Crisil said that the moderation implies a decline of 140 basis points in CPI inflation during this financial year, which is likely to give space for monetary easing.

It said the RBI may cut rates by another 25 basis points this year. According to Crisil, lower inflation and reduced interest rates should increase domestic demand in the economy as global headwinds mount.

The report said the excessive rains during kharif season could cause disruptions in key horticulture and foodgrain-growing regions like Punjab, which is facing its worst floods in four decades. CPI inflation inched up to 2.1 per cent in August 2025, from 1.6 per cent in July, moving above the RBI tolerance threshold of 2 per cent. *—PTI*

US tariffs weigh heavy as equity takes biggest hit

FPI outflows & tariff jitters led to fall, says Crisil report

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

The imposition of a 50 per cent tariff hike by the United States (US) on the imports from India weighed on domestic financial conditions in August, with equity markets taking the biggest blow, according to a report by Crisil.

The rating agency said that its Financial Conditions Index (FCI) declined to -0.5 in August from -0.4 in July. The FCI is a monthly indicator that combines parameters across the money, debt, equity and foreign exchange markets.

A lower FCI value indicates financial conditions were tighter than the previous month, while a negative value implies it was tighter than the long-period average (measured since April 2010). That said, the FCI for August remains within the comfort zone of one standard deviation.

Net outflows from foreign portfolio investments (FPIs) continued for the third straight month. Persistent FPI outflows and tariff nervousness led to a decline in equity market performance, with benchmark indices declining 2 per cent on a month-on-month basis.

The rating agency said that its Financial Conditions Index (FCI) declined to -0.5 in August from -0.4 in July ***PHOTO: AI***

Persistent FPI (Foreign Portfolio Investment) outflows and nervousness regarding the impact of tariffs led to a decline in equity markets' performance, with benchmark indices declining 2 per cent on a month-on-month basis, the report added.

FPI outflows also added pressure on the rupee, which reached an all-time low of 87.8 against the dollar in August and weakened 1.6 per cent on a monthly basis.

Equity market outflows were on account of the US tariff hike of 50 per cent on India in August. Net outflows in equity rose to USD 4 billion (vs USD 2.1 billion in July), the highest since January.

According to Crisil, equity markets declined due to the impact of tariffs and continued foreign portfolio investor (FPI) outflows. On average, the S&P BSE Sensex and Nifty 50 dropped 2 per cent and 1.9 per cent month-on-month, respectively.

However, Crisil noted that the proposed revision in GST rates, anticipated boost to consumption, and a long-term sovereign credit rating upgrade for India by S&P Global helped limit a steeper market decline. *—ANI*

UNCERTAINTY TILL DEC

Aug inflation above 2% dents hopes of Oct rate cut: SBI

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

With August inflation slightly above the 2 per cent mark, hopes for a rate cut in October have dimmed, said SBI Research in its latest report.

The report added that the rate cut in December also appears uncertain, especially when weighed against the stronger-than-expected growth estimates for the first two quarters of the fiscal year.

The report added that changes in GST rates on services could reduce inflation on non-food items by another 40-45 basis points, based on a 50 per cent pass-through.

The government has reduced GST rates on many essential items (about 295 in total), bringing them down from 12 per cent to 5 per cent or even zero. This tax cut could lower inflation in these items by 25-30 basis points in FY26, assuming a 60 per cent pass-through to consumers, SBI Ecowrap added.

PHOTO: PTI

After dropping to a 98-month low of 1.55 per cent in July 2025, India's retail inflation (CPI) rose slightly to 2.07 per cent in August, mainly due to higher food and beverage prices. Core inflation (which excludes food and fuel) also went up to 4.16 per cent.

Both rural and urban areas saw a rise -- rural inflation increased to 1.69 per cent (from 1.18 per cent in July), and urban inflation rose to 2.47 per cent (from 2.10 per cent). Out of 35 states and union territories, 26 had inflation below 4 per cent in August. Only Kerala and Lakshadweep reported inflation above 6 per cent. *—ANI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Goyal: India, EU committed to beneficial trade

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

India and the European Union are committed to work for a balanced and mutually beneficial free trade agreement soon, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Saturday. EU Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic and the European Agriculture Commissioner Christophe Hansen were here to give a push to the ongoing negotiations for the trade agreement. Official teams of the two sides held the 13th round of talks. " We remain committed to working towards a balanced and mutually beneficial FTA soon, to unlock massive opportunities on both sides. Thank you for your visit," Goyal posted on X. *—PTI*

Indian REITs' yield higher than US, Singapore: Report

SINGAPORE, 13 SEPT

Indian Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) are generating an average yield of 6-7.5 per cent for unitholders, better than many mature markets, including the US, according to a report by CREDAI and Anarock.

CREDAI, the apex body of Indian real estate developers, and property consultant Anarock released a report 'Indian REITs - A Gateway to Institutional Real Estate' at an event here.

At present, there are five listed REITs in India - Brookfield India Real Estate Trust, Embassy Office Parks REIT, Mindspace Business Parks REIT, Nexus Select Trust, and Knowledge Realty Trust.

Nexus Select Trust are backed by rent-yielding retail real estate (shopping malls) while the other four are office REITs.

Comparing with other REIT markets globally, the report found that India still lags mature markets like the US,

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Singapore, and Japan in the diversification of REIT asset classes.

However, the risk-adjusted yields in India remain attractive, the consultant said.

The average yield in the US is 2.5-3.5 per cent, Singapore 5-6 per cent and Japan 4.5-5.5 per cent.

REITs are investment vehicles that own or operate income-generating real estate, enabling investors to earn a share of the income produced without directly purchasing the properties. *—PTI*

Adani invests $3B in Bihar's 2,400 MW power project

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Adani Power on Saturday said it will set up a 2,400 MW ultra super-critical power plant in Bihar at an investment of USD 3 billion (around Rs 26,482 crore).

The Adani group company, in a statement, said that it has signed a 25-year Power Supply Agreement (PSA) with Bihar State Power Generation Company Ltd (BSPGCL) to supply power from the project that will come up at Pirpainti in Bhagalpur district of the state.

The PPA is further to the Letter of Award issued by BSPGCL to Adani Power, on behalf of North Bihar Power Distribution Company Ltd (NBPDCL) and South Bihar Power Distribution Company Ltd (SBPDCL) in August.

Adani Power won the project by offering the lowest supply rate at Rs 6.075 per KWh.

The company said it plans to invest approximately USD 3 billion to build the new plant (800 MW X 3) and its supporting infrastructure under the Design, Build, Finance, Own, and Operate (DBFOO) model. The company aims to commission the plant in 60 months.

The coal linkage for the power plant has been allocated under the SHAKTI Policy of Government of India. The project will generate direct and indirect employment for 10,000-12,000 people during construction and 3,000 when in operation.

A part of the billionaire Gautam Adani-led group, Adani Power is the largest private thermal power producer in India. It has an installed thermal power capacity of 18,110 MW. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

'Over 6 crore income tax returns filed'

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

More than six crore income tax returns for Assessment Year 2025-26 have been filed so far, the Income Tax department said on Saturday.

The last date to file ITRs without penalty is September 15.

The I-T department said in a post on X, "To assist taxpayers for ITR filing, tax payment and other related services, our helpdesk is functioning on a 24x7 basis, and the department is providing support through calls, live chats, WebEx sessions & Twitter/X."

It also asked taxpayers who haven't filed ITR for AY 2025-26 to file at the earliest to avoid a last-minute rush.

The Income Tax department in May announced an extension of the due date for filing ITRs for Assessment Year (AY) 2025-26 (for income earned in financial year 2024-25) by individuals, HUFs and entities who do not have to get their accounts audited from 31 July to 15 September.

The extension was on account of "structural and content revisions" in the income tax return (ITR) forms, which was notified in late April and early May. The changes made in the ITR form for AY 2025-26 also need modifications to be made in ITR filing utilities and the back-end system.

ITR filings have shown consistent growth over the years. For AY 2024-25, a record 7.28 crore ITRs were filed up to 31 July, 2024. *—PTI*

Dollar dominance unlikely to change in near future: Gita

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPTEMBER

- The importance of any currency in the world depends upon how much one trades with the world, she said during a recent episode of IMF Podcasts

Gita Gopinath, former IMF Chief Economist and Deputy Managing Director, now back again at Harvard as a Professor, believes dollar dominance is unlikely to change in the near future, citing the strength of American institutions and its financial markets as critical factors.

During her tenure at the IMF, among the few topics that regularly came up in her research work was dollar dominance.

Asked in a recent episode of IMF Podcasts as to why she was so interested in those aspects of the economy, referring to dollar dominance, she said it is the asymmetry and power in the world that prompted her to work on those areas.

"...the world is highly asymmetric," she said, referring to the dominance of the dollar.

The importance of any currency in the world depends upon how much one trades with the world, she said during the podcast Bruce Edward, whose transcripts were made available online.

Reality is, however, so far from that, she continued.

"...and it's not just about that emerging markets don't get to use their currencies as much, but including many advanced economies, their currencies don't really show up in the world, depending upon their share in global trade," she noted in the podcast.

"Instead, what you see is dollar dominance, not just in trade, but in finance, in payments, in reserves, and that has very important implications for the way economies respond to shocks, what kinds of policies will work and what don't," she added.

The role of the US dollar in the global economy and international trade is referred to as dollar dominance. Gopinath took a leave of absence from Harvard University back in 2018 to take on the role of IMF Chief Economist. *—ANI*

AMID TARIFF WAR

Auto parts industry to benefit from trade shifts: McKinsey

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Shivanshu Gupta, Senior Partner at global management consulting firm McKinsey, on Friday said he believes the disruption in global trade flow can come as a shot in the arm for Indian auto component makers - both on the ICE and EV front.

"...there is a lot of trade flow disruption that is happening in the world, which is also creating opportunity for us (India)," Gupta told ANI, on the sidelines of the Automotive Component Manufacturers Association of India's annual event here in the national capital.

Gupta said Indian auto component manufacturers will remain relevant.

"We will still be a largely ICE (Internal Combustion Engine) component market in India. But also globally, there will be a lot of players who will rely on other countries to have ICE components. And I think India can be a very large part of that play," he said.

Gupta foresees that almost USD 20 to 30 billion of incremental revenue in the next four to five years can come through.

On scope in the EV space, Gupta said India can play a key role at a time when a large electrification wave is happening in the mobility space, both domestically and globally.

He reiterated that as global trade flows shift, Indian auto components are set to be one of the biggest beneficiaries.

Speaking of the rare earth shortage, he conceded that it is "a real challenge".

"There are a lot of things that the government is trying that the industry is trying there is also recycling that can be done to resolve that, so I think there will be resolutions you know which are in the pipe which should happen," he added. *—ANI*

GOOGLE AI SCIENTIST'S TIP

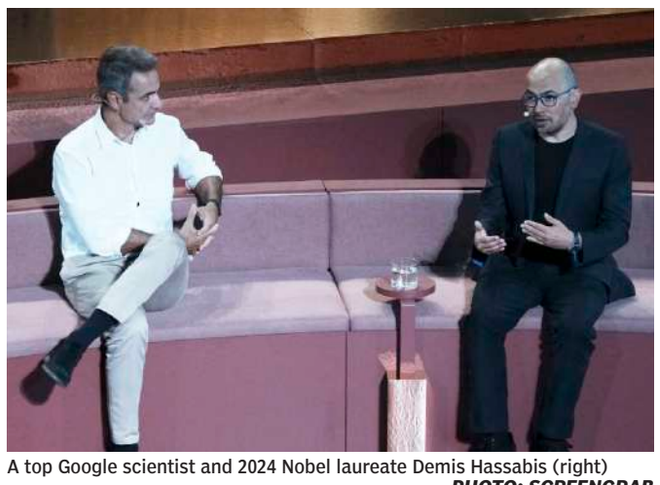
'Learning how to learn will be the most needed skill'

ATHENS, 13 SEPT

A top Google scientist and 2024 Nobel laureate said Friday that the most important skill for the next generation will be "learning how to learn" to keep pace with change as Artificial Intelligence transforms education and the workplace.

Speaking at an ancient Roman theatre at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens, Demis Hassabis, CEO of Google's DeepMind, said rapid technological change demands a new approach to learning and skill development.

"It's very hard to predict the future, like 10 years from now, in normal cases. It's even harder today, given how fast AI is changing, even week by week," Hassabis told the audience. "The only thing you can say for certain is that huge change is coming."



A top Google scientist and 2024 Nobel laureate Demis Hassabis (right) ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

The neuroscientist and former chess prodigy said artificial general intelligence — a futuristic vision of machines that are as broadly smart as humans or at least can do many things as well as people

- It's very hard to predict the future, like 10 years from now, in normal cases. It's even harder today, given how fast AI is changing, even week by week," Demis Hassabis said

can — could arrive within a decade. This, he said, will bring dramatic advances and a possible future of "radical abundance" despite acknowledged risks.

Hassabis emphasised the need for "meta-skills," such as understanding how to learn and optimising one's approach to new subjects, alongside traditional disciplines like math, science and humanities.

"One thing we'll know for sure is you're going to have to continually learn ... throughout your career," he said.

The DeepMind co-founder, who established the London-based research lab in 2010 before Google acquired it four years later, shared the 2024 Nobel Prize in chemistry for developing AI systems that accurately predict protein folding — a breakthrough for medicine and drug discovery.

Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis joined Hassabis at the Athens event after discussing ways to expand AI use in government services. Mitsotakis warned that the continued growth of huge tech companies could create great global financial inequality.

"Unless people actually see benefits, personal benefits, to this (AI) revolution, they will tend to become very sceptical," he said. *—PTI*

Govt, Amazon start campaign against scams

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), established by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and Amazon India are collaborating to launch #ScamSmartIndia, a nationwide initiative designed to safeguard consumers from the growing threat of online scams and fraud.

According to a joint statement from I4C and Amazon, this partnership aims to take scam literacy to the grassroots, making it accessible, relatable, and actionable by combining education, awareness, and technology-led prevention.

As part of the campaign, I4C and Amazon will jointly drive a series of initiatives at a national and regional level in the coming months.

These include engaging social media content that transforms complex fraud scenarios into easy-to-understand

safety tips, digital ads featuring safety advisories that reach millions of households, educational flyers in Amazon packages that turn each delivery into a personal safety reminder, weekly multilingual tips under the 'Scam-Free September' initiative to guide consumers to shop safely during the festive season and a national hackathon to develop AI-powered solutions for scam detection and prevention. Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C) is an initiative of the Ministry of Home Affairs to deal with cybercrime. *—ANI*

Hong Kong Open: Satwik-Chirag reach first final of season

HONG KONG, 13 SEPT

India's star men's doubles pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty ended a long wait for a title shot this year, storming into the final of the Hong Kong Open Super 500 with a straight-game win on Saturday.

The world No. 9 duo defeated Chinese Taipei's Bing-Wei Lin and Chen Cheng Kuan 21-17, 21-15 to make their first final of the season after six semifinal heartbreaks. The eighth-seeded Indians will face the winners of the other semifinal between China's Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang and Chinese Taipei's Fang-Chih Lee and Fang-Jen Lee. The opening game saw the two pairs locked at 3-3 and 6-6 before Satwik's smashes and Chirag's sharp interceptions helped the Indians inch ahead 11-8.

Though the Taiwanese clawed back to 12-12, the Indians surged to 15-12 and closed the game on their second game point with Chirag's angled, high-paced return.

Chen and Lin started stronger in the second, leading 4-2, but India restored parity at 6-6 after a service misjudgment from their opponents.

A couple of errors from Chirag gave the Taiwanese a 10-8 cushion, only for Satwik to unleash another booming smash to level things at 12-all.

From there, the Indians tightened their grip, moving to 17-15 as Satwik punished a weak return.

A year ago, the Indians endured the anguish of missing out on an Olympic medal after being stopped by Malaysia's Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik.

They salvaged some pride with a bronze at the World Championships, becoming only the third Indian pair after Saina Nehwal and PV Sindhu to win multiple medals at the event.

Saturday's win, therefore, was a statement of resilience as much as form, offering a glimpse of the hunger that once made them trailblazers for Indian doubles on the world stage. —*PTI*

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty **PHOTO: PTI**

PHOTO: X

Esha Singh wins women's air pistol gold

NINGBO, 13 SEPT

Olympian and reigning mixed team pistol world champion Esha Singh ended India's medal drought at the ISSF World Cup Rifle/Pistol, clinching gold in the women's 10m air pistol here on Saturday. At the Ningbo Olympic Sports Centre, the 20-year-old edged out home favourite Yao Qianxun by 0.1 point in a tense final. Reigning Olympic champion Oh Yejin of South Korea took the bronze. This was Esha's maiden World Cup gold in the event, and it helped India move to fifth spot in the medal standings, joining four other nations with a gold medal. Hosts China lead the standings with two gold, four silver and one bronze. India has fielded their fourth to sixth-ranked shooters in each event at the tournament. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Egyptian Open: Abhay Singh claims career-best win

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPT

India's Abhay Singh notched up the biggest win of his career with a straight-game victory over world No. 17 Gregoire Marche of France in the opening round of the Egyptian Open, a USD 366,000 PSA World Tour Diamond event in Giza. The world No. 38 and multiple-time national champion prevailed 12-10, 11-9, 11-3 in 36 minutes to register his best result in terms of opponent's ranking. Abhay, who trains at the Indian Squash Academy in Chennai, will next face 10th seed Youssef Ibrahim of Egypt in the round of 32. However, there was disappointment for reigning national champion Velavan Senthilkumar, who went down to Britain's world No. 28 Jonah Bryant 8-11, 11-5, 9-11, 1-11 in his first-round match. —*PTI*

Nottingham Forest lose 3-0 to Arsenal

LEVERKUSEN, 13 SEPT

Ange Postecoglou got a harsh reintroduction to the Premier League with new team Nottingham Forest as Arsenal's new signings Martin Zubimendi and Viktor Gyokeres combined to secure a 3-0 win on Saturday. Zubimendi volleyed home spectacularly from the edge of the area in the 32nd minute to put Arsenal in front before Gyokeres tapped in a cross from Eberechi Eze, another summer signing, to double the lead in the 46th. Zubimendi headed in the third in the 79th minute to complete a miserable return to English football for Postecoglou.—*PTI*

India plays out a 1-1 draw with Japan

HANGZHOU, 13 SEPT

India squandered an early lead to play out a 1-1 draw against Japan in their last Super 4s match to keep their hopes alive for a place in the final of the women's Asia Cup here on Saturday. India made a strong start, with Beauty Dung Dung putting them ahead in the seventh minute with a field goal. But Japan hit back late, as Shiho scored the equaliser just two minutes from the hooter. It was the second draw between the two sides in this tournament, after their pool-stage clash had also ended 2-2. A win against Korea would have straightaway put India in the final against hosts China. Their hopes of a final berth will now depend on the result of the match between China and Korea later in the day.—*PTI*

India & Pakistan contest lacks on-ground hype

Match lacks high-pitched narrative which is usually a given

DUBAI, 13 SEPT

A spoilt-for-choice Indian squad will be the favourite by a country mile against arch-rivals Pakistan here on Sunday in their Asia Cup encounter, which is strangely devoid of any hype despite border tensions that have only risen in the past few months.

There is no dearth of context in the contest with a T20 World Cup set to be played in India in four months.

But for the first time in many years, a cricket match between India and Pakistan, that too scheduled on a Sunday, lacks the kind of high-pitched narrative that always comes with the territory.

There are batters like Shubman Gill, Suryakumar Yadav, Abhishek Sharma, a pacer like Jasprit Bumrah, spinners of Kuldeep Yadav and Varun Chakravarthy's calibre in the Indian playing XI. The Indians look way more menacing on paper compared to Pakistan, who are trying to find their feet under new skipper Salman Ali Agha.

However, considering the fickle nature of the format, there is always the chance of an upset, but against this Indian team, the probability remains low.

One of the most talented batters in Pakistan's line-up, opener Saim Ayub, middle-order willow-wielder Hasan Nawaz and the troika of spinners in Abrar Ahmed, Sufiyan Muqeen and Mohammed Nawaz would love to prove a point in a new look team that dumped the philosophy of depending heavily on Babar Azam and Muhammad Rizwan. With thousands of tickets still available and very few fans turning up at the India practice on Friday, the festive excitement surrounding the match is missing.

The social media calls for a boycott by India have found resonance to an extent, and as a result, no one knows how many BCCI officials, who otherwise make a beeline during marquee events, will turn up on Sunday. Normally, an Indo-Pak match has been about Indian batters locking horns with Pakistani pacers, but this time around, the spinners of both sides will have a significant role to play, considering that Jasprit Bumrah and Shaheen Shah Afridi are the only specialist pacers who will be seen in action on Sunday.

The Government of India has allowed the national team's matches against its bitter rivals at multi-nation tournaments but not at the bilateral level.

Jersey sponsors will be finalised in 15-20 days: Shukla

BCCI vice president Rajiv Shukla on Saturday said the new jersey sponsor of the Indian cricket team will be finalised in the next two to three weeks, with bids scheduled to close on 16 September.

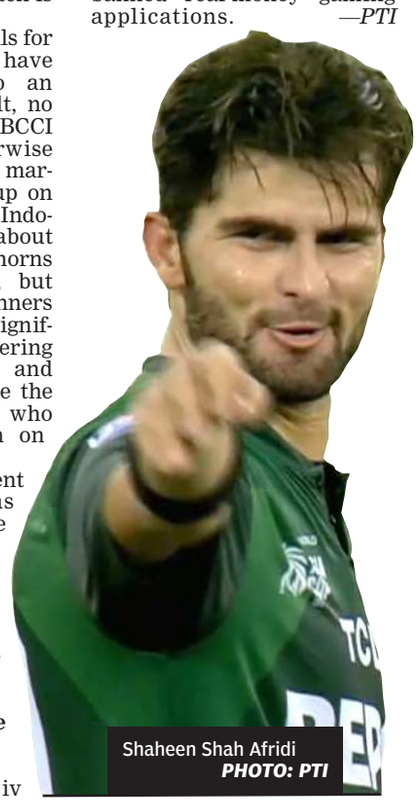
Team India is without a shirt sponsor in the ongoing Asia Cup after the BCCI's deal with online gaming company Dream11, worth Rs 358 crore per year, was cut short following the enactment of the Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, which banned real-money gaming applications. —*PTI*

HEAD TO HEAD ASIA CUP

PLAYED:	13
INDIA WON:	10
PAKISTAN WON:	3

INDIA vs PAKISTAN MATCH STARTS AT **8.00 PM IST**

Jasprit Bumrah **PHOTO: PTI**



Shaheen Shah Afridi **PHOTO: PTI**

Former Cricketers Dinesh Karthik and Mithali Raj during the unveiling of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup Trophy in Bengaluru on Saturday. **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

SALT'S FASTEST HUNDRED

England smash T20 records at SA's expense

MANCHESTER, 13 SEPT

Phil Salt's fastest and highest Twenty20 hundred for England launched the third biggest ever men's total and a smashing 146-run win over South Africa on Friday.

Salt's 141 not out and Jos Buttler's 83 propped up England's 304-2, which included 18 sixes and 30 boundaries.

South Africa followed with resolve but was 64-3 after the powerplay and lost captain Aiden Markram for a team-high 41 off 20 in the eighth over when the result became inevitable. The Proteas were all out for 158 in the 17th over.

It was their heaviest T20 loss by runs and England's biggest win by runs.

"That was really good fun," Salt told broadcaster Sky Sports. "A personal milestone, but the fact we got 300 and won by such a big margin, I can't have asked for much more."

The three-match series goes to a tiebreaker on Sunday in Nottingham.

"With the batting lineup we have got, there are not many heights we can't reach," England captain Harry Brook said. "Every must-win game we have now leading to the T20 World Cup (in February) is awesome preparation for us." The Proteas chose to bowl first in the hope of using the moisture in the air, but all they caught was lightning from openers Salt and Buttler at their club ground, Old Trafford. —*PTI*

Phil Salt **PHOTO: PTI**

Minakshi punches her way to final in WB C'ships

LIVERPOOL, 13 SEPT

Minakshi Hooda continued her impressive run to become the third Indian woman boxer to enter the final at the World Championships, beating Mongolia's Lutsaikhany Altantsetseg in the 48kg semifinals here on Saturday.

Minakshi, a former Asian Championships and World Cup silver medallist, registered a dominant 5-0 win over the 2023 world championships silver medallist in the 48kg semifinal.

With the victory, Minakshi joined Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine Lamboria (57kg) and heavyweight boxer Nupur Sheoran (80+kg), both of whom stormed into the finals with comprehensive wins on Friday.

Later on Saturday, Jaismine and Nupur will be in action alongside Pooja Rani (80kg), who will compete in her semifinal bout. —*PTI*

Central Zone poised to win title after Yash Rathod's 194

BENGALURU, 13 SEPT

Yash Rathod scored his highest first-class score of 194 as Central Zone constructed a massive first-innings lead of 362 against South Zone to gain complete control of the Duleep Trophy final here on Saturday.

Central started the third day at a strong 384 for five, with Rathod on 137, and they made 511 before getting bowled out an hour into the post-lunch session. South reached 129 for two in their second innings, still trailing by 233 runs.

Ravichandran Smaran (37) and Ricky Bhui (26) were at the crease at stumps. But the star of the day was undoubtedly Rathod, the highest run-getter in the previous Ranji Trophy season with 960 runs, who came into the final after squandering two golden chances against NorthEast Zone to notch hundreds.

In the quarterfinal, the left-hander made 87 and 78 before getting dismissed for two in the semifinal against the West Zone.

But, overnight 137, Rathod soon reached 150 off 223 balls and then went past his previous highest of 151, swelling the sixth-wicket partnership with Saransh Jain (69, overnight 47) to 176.

Rathod explained his game plan against the spinners — Ankit and leg-spin of Bhui.

Central went for lunch at 488 for six after losing Jain to Ankit (4/180), and Rathod too walked back soon after the resumption.

The 25-year-old missed a Gurjapneet Singh (4/124) delivery that came back a shade from the off-stump line, sneaking past the down-coming bat to rattle the stumps.

Once Rathod fell just six runs short of a maiden double century, Central folded very soon, losing the remaining three wickets in the space of 11 runs. South Zone, who were bundled out for 149 in the first innings, displayed better intent in the second innings.It started with openers Tanmay Agarwal (26) and Mohit Kale (38) adding 62 for the opening wicket before the latter was trapped plumb in front by off-spinner Jain. —*PTI*

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